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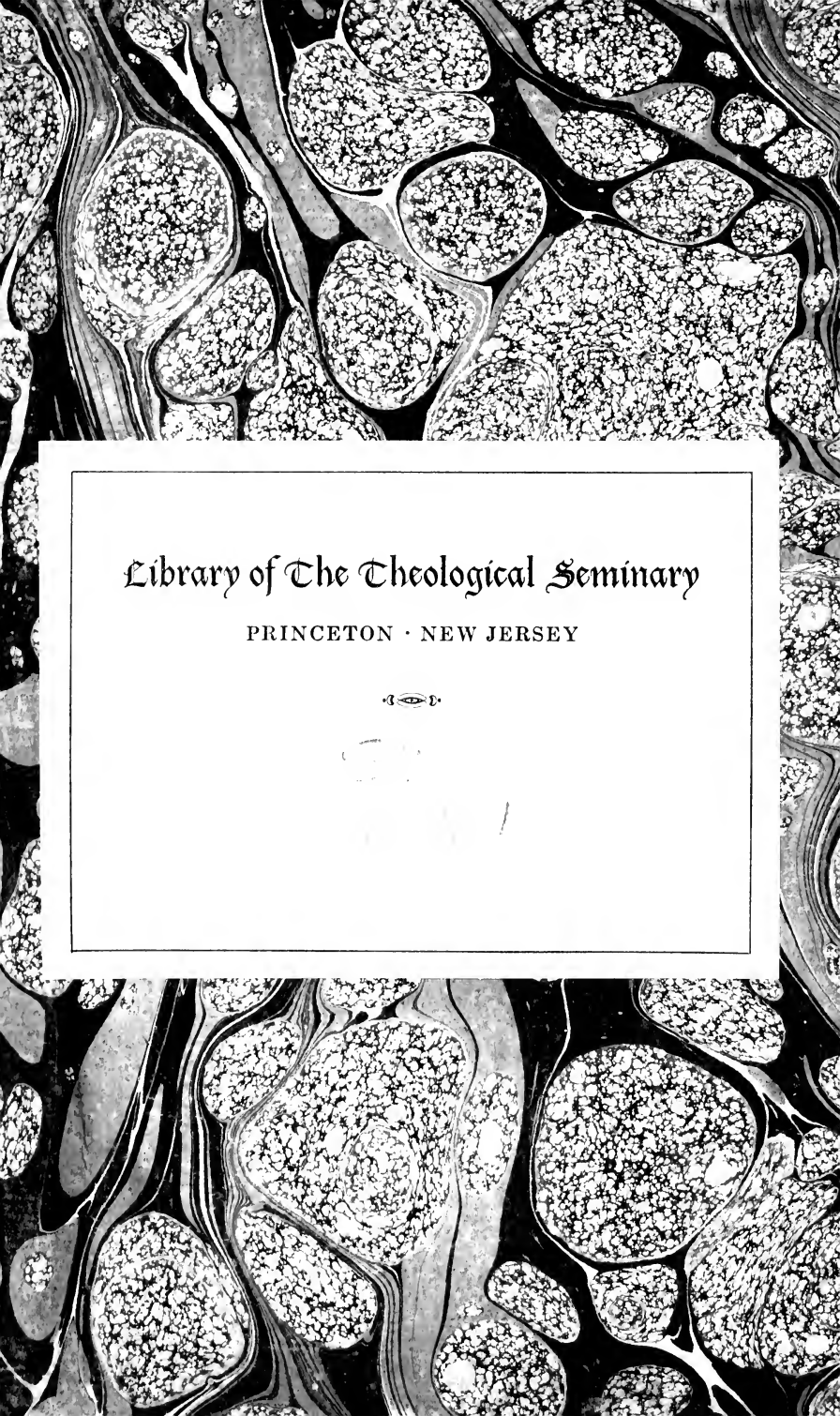
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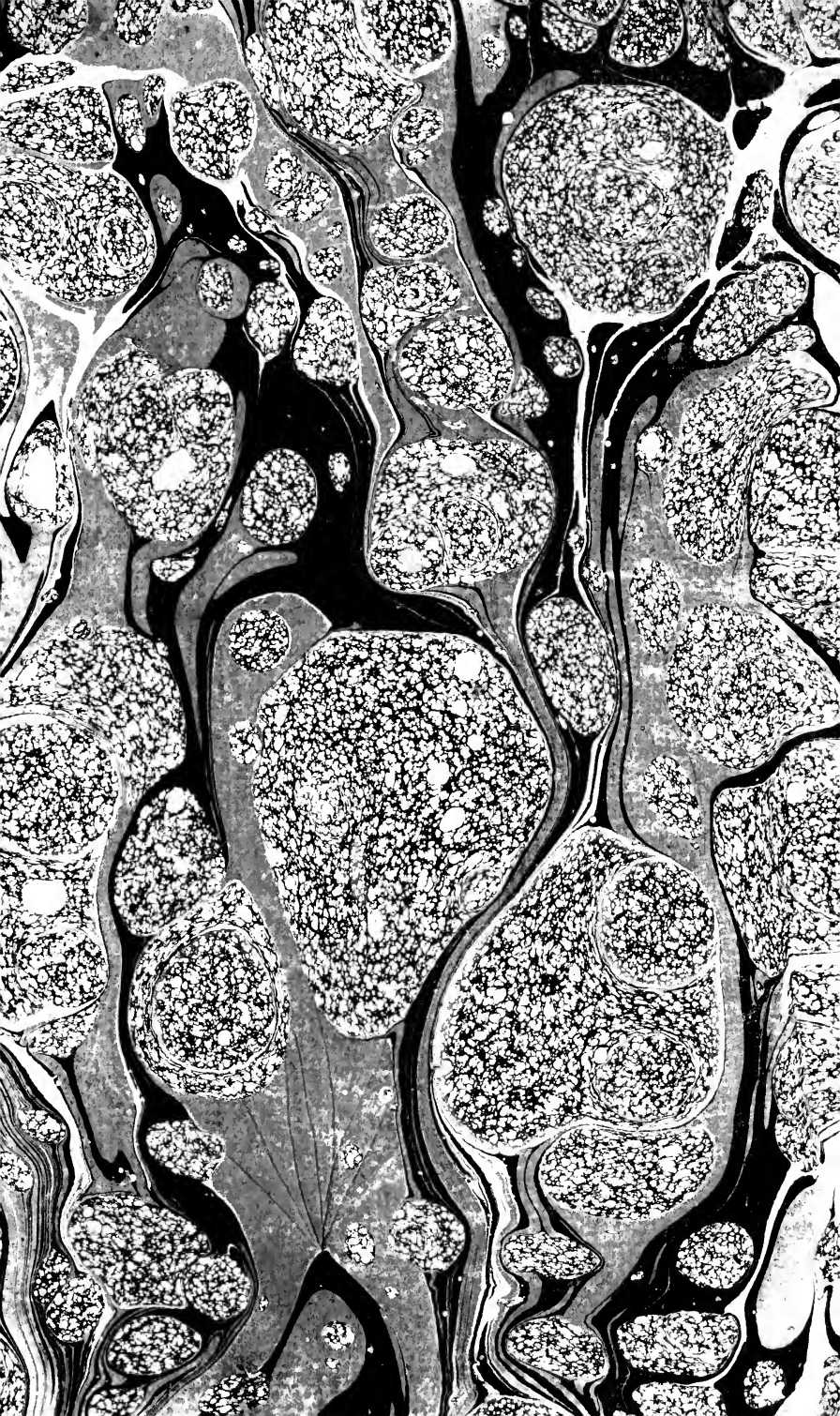

RULES OF DISCIPLINE

OF THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD

IN PHILADELPHIA.

PRINTED BY DIRECTION OF THE MEETING.

PHILADELPHIA:

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1806.

INTRODUCTION.

AS it hath pleased the Lord in these latter days, by his spirit and power, to gather a people to himself; and, releasing them from the impositions and teachings of men, to inspire them with degrees of the same universal love and good will by which the dispensation of the gospel was ushered in, these have been engaged to meet together for the worship of God in Spirit, according to the direction of the holy Lawgiver; as also for the exercise of a tender care over each other, that all may be preserved in unity of faith and practice, answerable to the description which He the ever-blessed Shepherd gave of his flock "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35.

For this important end, and as an exterior hedge of preservation to us, against the many temptations and dangers, to which our situation in this world exposes us, the following rules have been occasionally adopted by the society, and now form our code of discipline. In the

exercise whereof it is to be observed that, if any member be found in a conduct subversive of its order, or repugnant to the testimonies which we believe we are intrusted with for the promotion of truth in the earth, it becomes our indispensable duty to treat with such, in meekness and brotherly compassion, without unnecessary delay or improper exposure; according to the direction of our Lord to his church "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen-man and a publican." Matt. chap. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

This is the extent of the society's censure against irreclaimable offenders, they are disowned as members of our religious community; which is recommended to be done in such a disposition of mind, as may convince them, that we sincerely desire their recovery and restoration, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted." Gal. vi. 1.

For the more regular and effectual support of this order of the society, beside the usual

meetings for the purpose of Divine worship, others are instituted subordinate to each other ; such as *First.* Preparative meetings, which emomonly consist of the members of a meeting for worship ; *Second.* Monthly meetings, each of which commonly consits of several preparative meetings ; *Third.* Quarterly meetings, each of which consists of several of the monthly meetings ; and *Fourth*, the yearly meeting * which comprises the whole.

These meetings have all distinct allotments of service ; and as experience shews that when this service is attended to in uprightness and dedication of heart, with a single eye to the honour of our Holy Head, and the help and edification one of another, in the love wherewith he has loved us, our assemblies are often favoured with his aid and direction ; Friends are affectionately desired and exhorted, to be diligent in the attendance of them ; and when met, humbly seek to be clothed with the spirit of wisdom and charity ; this will divest the mind of a dependance on our own strength and abilities, endue us with patience and condescension towards each other ; and being preserved in fellowship agreeably to our Lords declaration, " One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," a qualification will be experienced in

* In the society there are seven such yearly meetings, viz. one in Great Britain, and six on the American continent.

our several stations and movements to build up one another in that faith which works by love to the purifying of the heart.

So may we be living members of the Church-militant on earth; and inhabitants of that city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder the Lord is; knowing indeed with exceeding joy that great is He the Holy One of Israel in the midst of her.

APPEALS.

IF any person be dissatisfied with, or think themselves aggrieved by the judgment of a monthly meeting, they may, after a copy of the testimony is delivered to them, notify the first or second meeting (but no other) of their intention of appealing to the ensuing quarterly meeting: which notification the monthly meeting should enter on its minutes, and appoint four or more Friends, to attend the quarterly meeting with that, and copies of the minutes of the mens or womens meeting, relative to the case, signed by the clerk, or clerks, there to show the reasons whereon that judgment was founded, and submitting it to the said meeting. The quarterly meeting is then to refer the same to a solid committee of Friends (omitting those of the monthly meeting from which the appeal comes) and to confirm or reverse the said judgment as, on impartial deliberation, shall appear to be right, taking care to inform the parties of the result.

Notice of appealing to be given to the monthly meeting.

Committee of the monthly meeting appointed to attend the quarterly meeting thereon.

Committee of the quarterly meeting appointed.

If such appellant is dissatisfied with the judgment of a quarterly meeting also; and, on being

Notice to be given to the quarterly of the intention of carrying the appeal to the yearly meeting.

informed thereof, shall notify that or the next (but not afterwards) of their intention to apply to the yearly meeting for a further hearing, the said quarterly meeting, after recording such notification, is in like manner to appoint at least three Friends, to attend the yearly meeting with copies of the

Copies of the records of both monthly and quarterly meetings to be taken to the yearly meeting.

records of both the monthly and quarterly meetings in the case, signed by their clerks; here it is to be finally determined, and a copy of the determination is to be sent to the meeting from which the appeal came.

ARBITRATIONS.

IF occasions of differences arise between any of our members about their property, it is recommended that the parties proceed in the following manner:

Mode prescribed for settlement of differences about property.

Let the party who thinks him or herself aggrieved, calmly and kindly request the other to comply with the demand; and, if this be disputed, the complainant, or if he or she lives at too great a distance, some Friend whom they may authorise, should take with him one or two of the overseers, or other discreet Friends, and in their presence repeat the demand.

Reference to Arbitrators advised.

If this step also fails of the desired effect, the parties should be advised to choose a suitable number of Friends as arbitrators, and mutually engage by bond, or other written instrument adapted to the occasion, to abide by their determination.

Should this proposal be acceded to, and arbitrators accordingly chosen; they ought, as speedily as circumstances will admit, to appoint

Arbitrators should give the parties a full and impartial hearing.

time and place, and attend to the business without unnecessary delay; giving the parties a fair and full hearing in the presence of each other, but listening to neither of them apart, nor suffering their own sentiments to be known abroad till they have fully digested the subject, and come to a clear decision, which they should be careful to do within the time agreed on.

Either party not complying with the order recommended, is to be complained of to the monthly meeting.

But, if either of the said parties shall refuse to submit the matter in dispute to arbitrators; or, when that is done, neglect to give his or her attendance when desired, without a sufficient reason being assigned; or not abide by their award when issued; in either of those cases, the offender should be complained of to the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member; and if they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, the said meeting should declare its disunion with them, unless such person make it evident to the satisfaction of the said meeting that the award is erroneous or unjust. In which case the matter in dispute may be referred either to the same, or other arbitrators as the meeting shall judge best; and their award shall be final. After which if either of the parties at variance, prove so regardless of peace and unity as not to acquiesce in such corrected determination, the monthly meeting they belong to should proceed to issue a testimony against him or her so refusing.

An erroneous or unjust award cause of rehearing.

Where arbitrators are at a loss for want of legal knowledge, it may be proper for them, at the joint expense of the parties to take the opinion of counsel learned in the law, in order to come at a proper judgment in the matter referred to them. And that they may the better answer the end of their appointment, and be helpful in conciliating the minds of the parties, they ought not to consider themselves as advocates for those by whom they are chosen, but as men, whose duty it is to judge righteously, fearing the Lord. They should, as much as may be, shun all previous information respecting the case; or, having heard any thing on it, stand unbiassed thereby. They should reject no evidence or witness proposed; nor receive any but in the presence of both parties; and in their award, they need not assign any reason for their determinations.

Arbitrators may be allowed to consult counsel:

But not to consider themselves as advocates for either party.

No evidence to be rejected, but received in the presence of both parties.

The award may be without assigning any reason for the determination.

And whereas there may be some circumstances even in disputed matters, wherein the foregoing wholesome method of proceeding cannot be complied with; such as, 1st. The party absconding, or leaving the country with design to defraud his or her creditors; or, 2d. That the going through the meetings, by the time it must necessarily take up, might be a manifest damage, to the creditor or claimant, by other peoples postponing him or her, as in cases of apparent danger of bankruptcy, or the party being overloaded with debts, and other creditors

Cases excepted.

generally coming on; or, 3d. That there may be danger of future damage to such as submit thereto, as in the case of executors, administrators, or trustees; it may therefore be necessary, and it is advised, that the monthly meeting where such cases happen, do hold excused such as shall in the two first mentioned circumstances in this paragraph, appear to them to be really necessitated to proceed at law; and in the latter case of executors, administrators or trustees, where it shall appear to the meeting that our friendly way would be unsafe, such may be permitted to have the matter tried at law, with this caution, that the parties on both sides do behave towards each other in brotherly love, decency and moderation, without anger or animosity, which will be a becoming testimony even in courts, and show that nothing but the nature of the case, and our station in common with others, under the laws of the land, bring any of us there.

Permission to have a disputed case tried at law.

As it may sometimes occur that a member, either for want of a clear understanding of the business, or through an improper influence may present a complaint against another member, wherein the overseers, after fully hearing both parties, being decidedly of opinion that the case does not require a reference, they are to advise a speedy settlement thereof; which being ineffectual, and the complainant remaining dissatisfied therewith, he may have liberty to in-

Overseers to consider carefully the nature of complaints.

form the preparative meeting where the other party is a member (without mentioning any name) that having a matter in dispute with one of their members, he is desirous of their assistance in order to a settlement thereof;....the said meeting is then to appoint a judicious committee to inquire into the propriety of the matter being left to arbitration; if they should judge that the complaint ought to be referred, they are to advise that it be submitted accordingly; but if the said committee concur in judgment with the overseers, the complaint is to be dismissed.

Preparative meeting to appoint a committee.

It is desired that persons differing about worldly affairs, do as little as may be, engage friends in the ministry as arbitrators in such cases.

Friends in the ministry should be excused from serving as arbitrators, as much as may be.

BIRTHS AND BURIALS.

AS those who attend burials may sometimes come from far, and be in need of bodily refreshments, it is earnestly advised that, when this is really necessary, it may be taken in moderation; and that Friends be careful in this and all other respects to demean themselves with gravity and decency; remembering that such seasons, especially, ought never to be perverted into opportunities for intemperance or levity. And it is desired that when any thing unseemly appears, the offender may be taken aside and tenderly admonished, that so every thing tending to lessen the solemnity of such occasions, may be avoided.

Solemnity of burials never to be perverted into opportunities for intemperance or levity.

It is recommended that one or more suitable Friends of each particular meeting be appointed by monthly meetings to attend at funerals, to see that good order is observed; and that the corpse be removed about an hour after the time set for meeting at the house.

Appointment to see that good order is observed at funerals.

Advised that Friends be careful themselves, and discourage their children from attending the

worship of those who are not in communion with us, and particularly at burials; seeing that, in so doing, there is a danger either of balking their testimony for the truth, to the wounding of their own minds, or giving unnecessary offence to their sober neighbours.

Religious caution to be observed respecting the worship of those not in communion with us.

It is the sense of this meeting, that meetings should not be appointed on account of the interment in our burial grounds of persons who are not in membership with us; and that invitations to the burials of such who are not interred in our burial grounds should not be made in our religious meetings.

No meeting to be appointed for interment of those not in membership: and no invitation but for those in our own grounds.

And also that Friends be religiously guarded in publishing invitations to the burials of such not in membership with us who are admitted to be interred in our grave yards.

Caution against invitations to the burials of those not in membership.

In order that meetings may not be held at the interment of our deceased members in a customary or formal way, it is advised, that the proposal for holding any such meeting be previously submitted to the consideration of the elders and overseers, or other solid Friends, either of the meeting in the compass of which the deceased resided, or of that in which the interment is to take place, that the counsel or mind of truth may be waited for and followed.

No formal or customary meetings to be held at interments.

Appointment to the care of burial grounds.

And to prevent the introduction of improper interments amongst us....it is recommended that two or more Friends be appointed to the care of our several burial grounds by preparative or monthly meetings, as the case may require, and that no person who is not in membership be buried therein, without a permit in writing signed by one or two of those Friends; who should also take care that our burial grounds be properly enclosed and kept in decent order.

It is further recommended, that at all interments, time be allowed for a solemn pause, both before and after the corpse is put into the ground.

No monuments of wood or stone to be in our grave yards.

It is the sense of this meeting, that no monuments either of wood or stone be affixed to graves in any of our burial grounds; and if any yet remain therein, that these be forthwith removed....so that no cause of uneasiness on this account may exist, or partiality be justly chargeable upon us.

Mourning habits vain and superfluous.

Friends are advised against imitating the vain custom of wearing or giving mourning habits, and all extravagant expenses about the interment of the dead.

Regular record of births and burials to be kept.

As great inconvenience may arise from the want of due attention to keeping a regular record of births and burials, it is earnestly en-

joined on each monthly meeting, that they appoint a careful Friend, whose duty it shall be, in a book provided for the purpose, at the monthly meeting's expense, to keep a record of all births and burials of members that shall occur within their respective limits and which shall be offered to him for that purpose; and in order to engage the attention of monthly meetings more closely to this subject, it is further enjoined, that an explicit answer be annually given by monthly to quarterly meetings, and through them to the yearly meeting to the query, Whether due care is taken to keep a regular record of births and burials?

The form of the record to be as follows....

Form of the records.

BIRTHS.

Names of the Children.	When born.	Names of the parents.	Their residence.	Occasional Notes.

BURIALS.

Names of the deceased.	When deceased.	Age.	Where buried.	Late Residence.	Occasional Notes.

BOOKS.

Meeting for sufferings to have the oversight of religious books or writings to be printed

IT being recommended to the meeting for sufferings to take the oversight of all writings proposed to be printed, which relate to our religious principles or testimonies; our members who may have any such publications in view, are to lay them before the said meeting, for its advice and concurrence. And it is the sense of this meeting that if any one shall print or publish any writing against the advice of said meeting for sufferings, or which tends to excite disunity and discord among us, such persons should be complained of to the monthly meeting they belong to, and if they cannot be convinced of the impropriety of their conduct, be testified against, as opposed to the peace and good order of the society.

Persons who publish contrary to this advice to be disowned.

Advice against reading pernicious books.

This meeting doth earnestly exhort all parents, heads of families and guardians of minors, that they prevent, as much as in them lies, their children, and others under their care and tuition, from having or reading books and papers tending to prejudice the profession of the Christian religion, to create the least doubt concern-

ing the authenticity of the holy Scriptures, or of those saving truths declared in them; lest their infant and feeble minds should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation laid for the greatest evils. And it is earnestly recommended to every member of our religious society, that they discourage and suppress the reading of plays, romances, novels, or other pernicious books; and printers and booksellers in profession with us, are cautioned against printing, selling, or lending such books; as it is a practice so inconsistent with the purity of the Christian religion. And Friends are desired to be careful in the choice of all books in which their children and families read, seeing there are many under the specious titles of promoting religion and morality, which contain sentiments repugnant to the truth in Christ Jesus.

And against printing, selling, or lending such books.

CERTIFICATES.

Certificates for travelling Friends to be seasonably returned.

IT is recommended to the quarterly and monthly meetings to take care, that all certificates or minutes which may be given to any travelling Friend be recorded, and upon the return of such Friend, seasonably delivered back to the meeting; and that all certificates of removal brought by any Friend intending to reside amongst us, shall be lodged in the monthly meeting, where the same is accepted; and also that every meeting do keep a copy or record of all certificates which they give out.

Those of removal to be lodged in the monthly meeting and recorded.

Mode of signing certificates.

All certificates of removal prepared for women Friends, after being considered in their monthly meeting, are to be sent to the mens', and if there approved, signed by the clerks of both. If they are directed to any place beyond the limits of this yearly meeting, they are to be signed by the clerks, and at least four other Friends of each sex. And if the certificate is for a man only, it is to be signed by the clerk of the mens' meeting, and at least four other men Friends.

Friends are advised to be very cautious in changing their places of residence: it having

Advice against injudicious change of residence.

been observed that the dissolving of old, and the forming of new connections, have in many instances been attended with effects prejudicial to a growth in the truth and the service thereof, both in the heads and younger branches of families; we therefore recommend to all, that on these occasions a strict attention be paid to the pointings of Divine Wisdom; and that before any determine to change their places of abode, they consult with their experienced fellow members.

Residence gained, on receipt of certificate.

It is the judgment of this meeting that when a certificate of removal from one monthly meeting to another is received, the person or persons recommended shall be deemed members of the meeting they remove to. But if any such persons shall fall into circumstances requiring pecuniary relief within one year after the receipt of such certificate, he, she, or they shall be considered as belonging to the monthly meeting from which they came. Yet the meeting removed to, ought to assist them, giving speedy notice thereof to the other. Whereupon that meeting should immediately take care of them, and repay the charge which has been or may be incurred on that account. And if the meeting from which such persons removed (on consulting with that within which they are) shall desire them to return, he or she ought to comply, as soon as they are of ability so to do; and the Friends where

Exceptions under certain circumstances.

they reside, should yield them such advice and assistance as the case may require.

Refusal to comply with the request of the meeting, cause for disownment:

And if any such persons on being so required shall refuse to comply, the said monthly meeting may deal with them as opposed to the order of the society, and if they cannot be prevailed with to submit, issue a testimony of denial against them.

But not to extend to persons in particular circumstances.

The above rule enjoining the return of members to the meetings they have removed from, is, however, not designed to extend to the wife of a person, who is not in membership with us, or to such of their minor children as are members; but if such should need relief, within one year as aforesaid, they should be assisted, in the manner recommended, by the meeting they removed from; if any Friend be reduced in his or her circumstances by fire or other sudden unavoidable losses, though it may be within one year after their removal as aforesaid, they should be kindly assisted and relieved by the meeting where such persons reside, and considered members thereof.

Application to be made for certificates.

All Friends removing out of the limits of their monthly meetings, whether for continuance, or for any considerable length of time, are advised to apply to their respective meetings for certificates directed to those within which they propose to sojourn or settle. But if any shall re-

move without so applying, the monthly meetings of which they are members, after the usual enquiry made, and no obstruction appearing, should send certificates for them to the monthly meetings within which they are removed, and that without improper delay; but if their conduct requires their being dealt with, and the distance such as to be inconvenient for the meeting they have removed from, the monthly meeting within which they are, should be requested to treat with him or her thereon, and report the effect of its care. On which, if it proves satisfactory, a certificate of recommendation or removal may be ordered; but if otherwise, and a testimony of disunion is issued, the meeting within which he or she resides, should be furnished with a copy thereof, to be delivered to the party, with information of their right of appeal.

Manner of treating with such as have removed at a distance.

It is to be understood that where apprentices, or persons under age, are under a necessity of going from one place to another, their parents or guardians, masters or mistresses, should apply for certificates for them, recommending them to the care and oversight of the monthly meetings whereto they remove.

Parents, guardians or masters to apply for certificates for minors.

If any person appearing as a Friend, come within the compass of a monthly meeting, not being recommended by certificate, and be of disorderly conduct, the overseers, or other concerned Friends, should enquire whether or not

Persons of disorderly conduct to be treated with.

he or she is a member of our society; and, if they prove so to be, admonish them, or, if the occasion require it, report the case to the preparative, and from thence to the monthly meeting; which should thereupon inform the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, of the circumstance, and take the direction of said meeting, for dealing further with them, according to our rules in cases of that nature.

Visits to such who bring certificates.

It is recommended that monthly meetings, as way may open, appoint two or more Friends to visit such, who come recommended by certificate to settle amongst them.

Certificates the property of monthly meetings, and to be seasonably forwarded.

Monthly meetings are advised to take due care that certificates of removal be seasonably forwarded by suitable conveyances to the monthly meetings to which they are directed....they being the exclusive property of such meetings.

CHARITY AND UNITY.

IT is advised, that where there is any appearance of dissension and variance, or of unkind resentment and shyness among our members, the parties be timely and tenderly apprised of the danger to which they thereby expose both themselves and others, and earnestly exhorted to mutual condescension and forgiveness, becoming the followers of Christ: And if any, notwithstanding such endeavours for their help, continue to manifest an implacable enmity to others, the overseers or other solid Friends of the preparative or monthly meeting they belong to, should be informed thereof, and labour further with them: when, if they still prove inflexible, they ought to be testified against as out of the unity of the body....the very end of whose existence is the promotion of peace on earth, and good will amongst men.

Dissension, variance or shyness, to claim early care.

Implacable enmity to be testified against.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Liberty of conscience asserted.

LIBERTY of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be indispensably incumbent upon us to maintain it inviolably among ourselves: and therefore advise and exhort all in profession with us, to decline the acceptance of any office or station in civil government, the duties of which are inconsistent with our religious principles; or in the exercise of which they may be, or think themselves to be, under the necessity of exacting of their brethren any compliances against which we are conscientiously scrupulous. And if any persons in membership with us, notwithstanding this advice, shall persist in a conduct so reverse to our principles and religious liberty, it is the sense of this meeting that they be treated with, as in other cases of offence; and if they cannot be brought to see and acknowledge their error, that the monthly meetings to which they belong should proceed to testify our disunity with them.

None to accept an office or station restraining the religious liberty of their brethren.

Such exercise of that authority cause of disownment.

None to elect or promote their fellow-members to stations which tend to lay waste our testimony.

And it is also the sense and judgment of this meeting, that Friends ought not, in any wise, to be active or accessary in electing, or promoting to be elected, their brethren to such offices or stations in civil government, the execution whereof tends to lay waste our Christian testimony, or subject their brethren or others to sufferings on account of their conscientious scruples.

Peaceable kingdom of Christ:

Believing that we are called to show forth to the world in life and practice, that the blessed reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, is begun, and we doubt not, will proceed till it attains its completion in the earth, when according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, "neither shall they learn war any more".... Influenced by these principles, we cannot consistently join with such as form combinations of a hostile nature against any; much less in opposition to those placed in sovereign or subordinate authority; nor can we unite with or encourage such as revile and asperse them, for it is written, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the "ruler of thy people." Acts xxiii. 5.

Whose subjects cannot join in hostile measures.

CONDUCT AND CONVERSATION.

Faithfulness recommended by the blessed example of our Saviour.

WHATEVER exercises we may meet with on account of a faithful testimony to the truth in all godliness of conversation; and to the end that we may not faint in our minds, let us consider the Captain of our salvation, who endured the contradiction of sinners, bearing his cross and despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God, where he continually maketh intercession for us....that following him, and under his banner fighting the good fight of faith, we may finally obtain the crown of righteousness which fadeth not away.

Immoral conduct to be testified against by the monthly meeting.

Advised that such be dealt with, who are given to lying, swearing, cursing; men and women unlawfully or unseemly keeping company with each other, or any other scandalous practice; and where any are guilty of gross or notorious crimes, or such other disorderly or indecent practices as shall occasion public scandal, after being dealt with by the overseers or other concerned Friends, if they are brought to a sense thereof, such offenders ought without improper delay, to remove the scandal, and clear, as much

as in them lies, our holy profession therefrom, by acknowledging the offence, and condemning the same in writing under their hand, to the satisfaction of the monthly meeting whereto they belong. And where any such offender refuseth so to acknowledge and condemn the fault, the said monthly meeting ought speedily to testify against him or her, and the fact.

Or by the offenders when brought to a due sense thereof.

If any in membership with us shall blaspheme, or speak profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, he or she ought early to be tenderly treated with for their instruction, and the convincement of their understanding, that they may experience repentance and forgiveness; but should any, notwithstanding this brotherly labour, persist in their error, or deny the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit, or the authenticity of the Scriptures; as it is manifest they are not one in faith with us, the monthly meeting where the party belongs, having extended due care for the help and benefit of the individual without effect, ought to declare the same, and issue their testimony accordingly.

Blasphemy &c. to claim early care of faithful Friends.

Persisting therein, or denial of the divinity of Christ, cause of disownment.

It is the earnest concern of this meeting that in all our dealings and transactions among men, strict justice may be observed, and that no motives of pecuniary interest may induce any of our members to impose on each other, or on

Strict justice in all our dealings to be observed.

their neighbours; and it is desired that monthly meetings may be careful to extend suitable admonition against a spirit of covetousness, and against every appearance of deviation from strict justice in any of our members.

Waiting in true stillness on the Lord, renews the mind with strength.

Frequent waiting in stillness on the Lord for the renewal of strength, keeps the mind at home in its proper place and duty, and out of all unprofitable association and converse, whether amongst those of our own, or other professions. Much hurt may accrue to the religious mind by long and frequent conversation on temporal matters, especially by interesting ourselves unnecessarily in them; for there is a leaven in that propensity, which being suffered to prevail, indisposes and benumbs the soul, and prevents its frequent ascendings in living aspirations towards the fountain of eternal life.

CONVINCED PERSONS.

Order prescribed for receiving convinced persons into membership.

IT is concluded that the following order be observed respecting persons who apply for admittance into membership, and request to come under the care of Friends....That they apply to the overseers or elders, who, when they are easy so to do, are to lay it before the preparative meeting; and after that meeting is fully satisfied, by paying a solid visit, or otherwise, they are to lay the case before the monthly meeting; which meeting shall appoint some suitable Friends to inquire into the persons' life and conversation, and also to take a solid opportunity of conference with the party, in order the better to understand whether his or her motives for such request be sincere, and on the ground of true convincement; and make report of their sense of the persons' suitableness to become a member; on which when the meeting is satisfied, a minute should be made, signifying the acceptance of such into membership, and appointing a Friend or two to acquaint the person thereof, requesting his or her attendance at the next monthly meeting.

But in all such cases, Friends are exhorted to attend carefully to the advice of the apostle, "Lay hands suddenly on no man:" the neglect of such caution having often been injurious both to the individuals and to the society....to them, by settling them in a false rest; and to the society, by adding to its numbers, without increasing its joy.

Weighty deliberation needful to be clearly satisfied of the party's fitness for membership.

Wherefore, we desire, that on every application of persons to be received into membership with us, monthly meetings may be deep and weighty in their deliberations and result; and when united in believing that the applicants are clearly convinced of our religious principles, and in a good degree subject to the divine witness in their own hearts, manifested by a circumspect life and conduct, said meetings are at liberty to receive such into membership, without respect to nation or colour.

DAYS AND TIMES.

Some reasons for not observing fasts and feast days and times, and other human injunctions and institutions relative to the worship of God.

EVER since we were a people we have had a testimony against formal worship, being convinced by the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, the testimonies of his apostles, and our own experience, that the worship and prayers which God accepts, are such only as are produced by the influence and assistance of his holy Spirit; we cannot therefore consistently unite with any in the observation of public fasts, feasts, and what they term holy days; or such injunctions and forms as are devised in man's will for divine worship; the dispensation to which outward observations were peculiar, having long since given place to the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, we believe the fast we are now called to is not the bowing of the head like a bulrush for a day, but an universal and continual fasting and refraining from every thing which has a tendency to defile the soul and unfit it for becoming the temple of the

Reasons against fast and feast days and times, &c.

Holy Ghost, according to the injunctions of Christ to his primitive disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his daily cross and follow me. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." That the primitive believers saw an end to these shadows of good things, by coming to Him in whom all figures and shadows end, is evident by the words of the apostle Paul; "For Christ, said he, is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. x. iv.— "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Heb. viii. 6. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii. 16. 17. And the same apostle thus expostulated with some who it appears had fallen from the true faith in these respects, "But now after that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage. Ye observe days and months, and times, and years : I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Gal. iv. 9, 10, 11.

DEFAMATION AND DETRACTION.

FRIENDS are every where exhorted to maintain a strict watch over themselves and each other against the subtle and mischievous spirit of tale-bearing and detraction....the manifest tendency of which is to lay waste the unity of the body, by sowing the seeds of disesteem, strife, and discord among brethren and neighbours; as well as to unfit those who either propagate or listen to evil reports, for being of that service to the persons reflected upon, which they might be if the order prescribed by our blessed Lord to his church, was strictly observed, viz. "If thy bro- "ther shall trespass against thee, go and tell him "his fault between thee and him alone: if he "shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. "But if he will not hear thee, then take with "thee one or two more, that, in the mouth of "two or three witnesses, every word may be "established. And if he shall neglect to hear "them, tell it unto the church; but if he ne- "glect to hear the church, let him be unto thee "as an heathen man and a publican."

Strict vigilance against the spirit of detraction recommended.

Gospel order.

Detractors to be testified against if the labour is ineffectual.

It is therefore advised that, in whomsoever this weakness appears, it may be immediately checked; and, if any one gives way to it, to the obvious injury of another's reputation or interest, let him or her be faithfully admonished; and, if they persist, and cannot be prevailed with to give due satisfaction, the preparative or monthly meeting should be informed of it, and deal further with them; when, if this produce not the desired effect, they should be testified against.

Reporters to be dealt with and if they will not discover the authors disowned.

And, if any member who offends in this respect, shelters him or herself under a pretence, that they say no more than they have heard from others, but will not discover who they are.... Such reporters or tale-bearers should in like manner be dealt with, and testified against as being themselves the authors.

DISCIPLINE AND MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

THE institution of our meetings for discipline having, on experience been found very beneficial, it is earnestly recommended they may be maintained in that authority, wherein they were established: Where any have been negligent in attending them, or opposed to their usefulness, carnality and spiritual death have been the consequence.

Connection and subordination of meetings.

The connection and subordination of our meetings for discipline are thus: Preparative meetings are accountable to the monthly; monthly to the quarterly; and the quarterly to the yearly meeting. So that if the yearly meeting be at any time dissatisfied with the proceedings of any inferior meeting; or a quarterly meeting with the proceedings of either of its monthly meetings; or a monthly meeting with the proceedings of either of its preparative meetings.... Such meeting or meetings ought with readiness and meekness to render an account thereof when required.

Meetings established by superior meetings.

It is agreed that no quarterly meeting be set up or laid down, without the consent of the yearly meeting; no monthly meeting without the consent of the quarterly meeting; nor any preparative or other meeting for business or worship till application to the monthly meeting is first made; and, when there approved, the consent of the quarterly meeting be also obtained. Also, that no meeting for worship intended to consist of Friends belonging to two or more monthly meetings shall be set up, until the proposal be offered to and approved by both those monthly meetings, and the consent of their respective quarterly meeting or meetings be obtained: when the meeting proposed, is opened, it should be attended by a few solid Friends, deputed by each of the said monthly meetings. And, if at any time, it is thought expedient, that a preparative meeting should be held at the same place, the consent of the said monthly and quarterly meetings should be, in like manner, applied for and obtained; and the said preparative meeting should be annexed to either one or the other of those monthly meetings, as may be most likely to conduce to the benefit of the individuals who compose it, and the advantage of society.

Meeting for worship consisting of members of two or more monthly meetings.

A meeting thus circumstanced appointed a preparative meeting.

Books to be provided for fair record of minutes.

It is directed, that a book be provided by every monthly and quarterly meeting, and fair minutes be kept therein, of all matters which shall come before and be determined by them. Monthly meetings, particularly, are advised to

attend to and finish all such business with care and dispatch, that it may, at no time, suffer by improper delay. And, if any case under consideration proves too weighty or difficult for them to determine, they should apply to their respective quarterly meetings for assistance; or, if the circumstances are such as to require it, refer it thereto by minute.

Monthly to apply to quarterly meetings for assistance.

It is the sense of this meeting, as a general rule in all cases, that where any monthly or quarterly meeting has occasion for, and requests copies of any of the papers, minutes, or records of another monthly or quarterly meeting, the same may accordingly be granted.

Copies of minutes may be granted to meetings:

Where any difference happens among Friends, and the same be entered in any monthly or quarterly meeting-book, it is agreed, that if the parties, or either of them, think that copies of such entries may be useful and necessary for them, and request the same, such monthly and quarterly meetings shall have a discretional power to give or refuse such copies, according to the circumstances and motives attending.

And also to persons if quarterly and monthly meetings approve thereof.

It is agreed, that a suitable number of men and women be appointed in each monthly meeting, to attend the service of the quarterly meeting, with such reports in writing, signed by their clerks, as may be given them in charge: also, that at least four of each sex be appointed

Representatives to be appointed in monthly meetings:

And also in quarterly meetings.

in each quarterly meeting, to attend the yearly meeting.

Punctual attendance advised.

And it is earnestly advised and desired, that all Friends who submit to these, or any other services of society, may be punctual in their attendance thereon; or, if prevented by sickness, or any other unavoidable occurrence, that they be careful to send information thereof; also, that those who are under appointments to meetings, do not withdraw therefrom before the conclusion, without obtaining the meetings' consent.

Near relations to parties intending marriage, may be permitted to see this procedure.

And when proposals of marriage are made, if any near relations of the parties (who are not in membership) are permitted to be present, they should withdraw before the meeting proceeds to any other business.

Mode of treating with such who reside at a distance.

It is advised that if a member under dealing removes into the compass of another monthly meeting; or, if previous to or after such removal the conduct of him or her has been such as to require their being dealt with....and their residence be at so great a distance as to render it inconvenient for the monthly meeting to which they belong, it should request that into which they are removed, to treat with them according to our rules, and to report the effect of its care; when, if it is satisfactory, the party should be recommended by certificate; or if otherwise, and a testimony of denial is issued, a copy thereof

should be sent to the monthly meeting within the limits of which he or she resides, and that meeting is to appoint two or more Friends to inform them thereof, and of their right of appeal.

Offenders not to sit in any meeting for discipline.

After a charge against a member for disorderly conduct is entered on the minutes of a monthly meeting, he or she should not be permitted to sit in any of our meetings for discipline, till the case is issued, and the monthly meeting satisfied.

It is advised, that where any transgress the rules of our discipline, they may, without partiality, be admonished and sought in the spirit of love and divine charity, so that it may be seen by all, that the restoring spirit of meekness and christian love abounds, before church censure takes place, and that a gospel spirit is the spring and motive to all our performances, as well in discipline as in worship.

Recommended that the discipline be managed in wisdom and with love to each other.

It is earnestly recommended, that in conducting the affairs of the church, Friends endeavour to manage them in the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus, with decency, forbearance and love to each other.

Explicit accounts of sufferings to be forwarded to the meeting for sufferings.

It appearing by the minutes of the meeting for sufferings, that on inspection of some of the accounts of sufferings sent up by the quarterly meetings, considerable difficulty has been occa-

sioned by those accounts, not expressing with sufficient clearness, what the sufferings mentioned were for; it is now desired that the monthly and quarterly meetings may in future leave out of their reports any instances which do not appear to be clearly consistent with the sense of this yearly meeting; and that they continue to collect and send up their accounts of sufferings annually as heretofore directed.

Rights of children defined.

As to the rights of children, whose parents have been married contrary to the rules of our discipline; it is agreed, that where either of those parents remain out of membership, their children should not be esteemed members, till application for their admission is made, either by themselves, or by their parent, parents, or guardians on their behalf, and the monthly meeting applied to, on a solid consideration of the case, is easy to admit them, or any of them.... The rights of children, born of parents who have been married according to our rules and disowned after their birth, are not intended to be affected by this rule: neither the rights of such minor children as are not of an age to judge for themselves, whose parents have both condemned their outgoing in marriage, while either of the said parents retains his or her right of membership.

Sorcery to be testified against.

If any member of our religious society, shall apply to those called jugglers or fortune-tellers, or those who by colour of any art or skill what-

soever, pretend to a knowledge of future events, hidden transactions, or where things lost or stolen may be found; or if any of our members shall use, or pretend to such art or skill, it is advised that they be speedily dealt with, and if they do not manifest a due sense of their evil conduct, that they be testified against.

Clerks to be seasonably changed.

A committee should be annually appointed in each of our quarterly and monthly meetings, for the nomination of clerks; which may afford opportunity for their being seasonably changed, and more of our qualified members exercised in those services.

Service of preparative meetings.

As the use and design of preparative meetings is in general to digest and prepare business as occasion may require, which may be proper to be laid before the monthly meeting, Friends ought to be careful therein, not to occasion unnecessary delays, or undertake to decide on any business which claims attention and care in monthly meetings.... And when cases are agreed to be carried forward, they should be entered in writing, and some suitable Friend or Friends named to produce them to the monthly meetings; and proper notes thereof should be carefully preserved by clerks of preparative meetings, as to said meetings may appear useful and right. But no preparative meeting shall take cognizance of proposals of marriage, this being exclusively the business of monthly meetings.

DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS.

EXECUTORS and trustees concerned in wills and settlements, are advised to a faithful and punctual discharge of their respective trusts, according to the intent of the donors and testators; and both they and the meetings concerned in any charitable gifts, legacies, or bequests, to take special care that these be not perverted or appropriated to any other uses than such as the donors or testators have directed and enjoined by legal settlement, will, or testament.

Appropriation of bequests &c. to be strictly observed.

FAMILY VISITS.

AS the visiting of Friends in their families in the openings of heavenly wisdom, is a service which hath often been blessed to the minds of the visitors and visited, this meeting hath from time to time recommended it to the solid attention of quarterly and monthly meetings: and it is desired, that concerns of this nature may be tenderly cherished, and those who are rightly exercised therein, encouraged to move forward in due season, and in a humble dependance on the Shepherd of Israel, who not only puts his own forth, but goes before and rewards all who are faithful to his appointments, with the enriching reward of sweet comfort and solid peace.

GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

AS our time passeth swiftly away, and our delight ought to be in the law of the Lord; it is advised that a watchful care be exercised over our youth, to prevent their going to stage-plays, horse-races, music, dancing, or any such vain sports and pastimes; and being concerned in lotteries, wagering, or other species of gaming. And if any of our members fall into either of these practices, and cannot be prevailed with, by private labour, to decline them, the monthly meetings to which the offenders belong, should be informed thereof, and, if they be not reclaimed by further labour, proceed to testify our disunity with them.

Gaming and evil diversions, cause of disownment.

LAW.

IF any member is complained of for withholding a just debt, he or she should be tenderly urged to payment; and if this is unavailing, be dealt with as in other cases of disorderly conduct. And if any of our members appear unable to satisfy their creditors, they should be advised to call them together without loss of time; and submit the state of their affairs to their inspection: when, if the creditors apprehend a surrender of the debtors' effects to assignees for the benefit of the whole to be necessary, let him or her be earnestly entreated to consent, and, if they refuse so to do, the monthly meeting should be informed thereof; when, if the party still persists in refusing, he or she should be disowned without too long delay.

Refusal to pay just debts to be testified against.

Debtors effects to be surrendered.

Refusing so to do, cause of disownment.

But if Friends in such difficult circumstances, manifest an honest intention, and shall offer their all to their creditors; let compassion and aid be extended to them as brethren, and objects of Christian charity....having done what they can, no more for the present is justly to be

Christian charity to be exercised.

Attainment of ability to discharge deficiencies to be honestly applied thereto.

expected from them. Yet it is the judgment of this meeting, that if persons so failing in their circumstances, should at any time afterwards be favoured with full ability to pay off their deficiencies, justice will require it of them, notwithstanding a composition with, and legal discharge from their creditors may have been obtained.

But no molestation to be admitted while debtors are endeavouring to retrieve their circumstances.

This is however not meant to furnish any with a pretext for advancing such claims while persons so deficient are honestly labouring to retrieve their circumstances, nor until it shall clearly appear to their respective monthly meetings, or to a solid committee thereof, that a sufficient ability is arrived at; when, if they are requested to comply, and persist in refusing, the said meetings should proceed to disown them.

Defaulters refusing to comply with the request of a monthly meeting, to be disowned.

And it is desired, that no debtors may shelter themselves under such of our rules, as are designed to guard us against an unkind treatment of each other, unjustly hoping to be thereby put out of the reach of the civil authority.

Suing at law disallowed.

And it is the sense of this meeting, that if any member thereof, disregarding the gospel order prescribed by our discipline, shall arrest or sue at law another member (not being under such a necessity so to do, as may satisfy the overseers or other solid and judicious Friends of the meeting to which the latter belongs) he or she in so doing, doth depart from the peaceable

principle we make profession of; and if on being treated with by the monthly meeting to which they belong, they cannot be prevailed with to withdraw the suit and pay the costs thereof, they should be disowned.

MARRIAGES.

Waiting for divine counsel and the consent of parents recommended.

IT is advised, that all young or unmarried people in membership with us, previously to their making any procedure in order to marriage, do seriously and humbly wait upon the Lord for his counsel and direction in this important concern; and when favoured with satisfactory clearness therein, they should early acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions, and wait for their consent; thus preservation from the dangerous bias of forward, brittle, and uncertain affections, would be experienced to the real benefit of the parties, and the comfort of their friends....And it is earnestly recommended to Friends, that they tenderly and carefully watch over the youth, and extend seasonable caution and admonition, as occasions may require.

None permitted to join in marriage without certificates of their clearness, and obtaining parents consent where practicable.

Agreed that all single persons, being about to marry at a distance from home, do take care to procure certificates from the monthly meeting they belong to, of their right of membership, and clearness from any other person in respect to marriage, and also that they obtain the mind of their parents or guardians therein; and that none

be permitted to join themselves in marriage until such certificates, and the consent of their parents or guardians thereto, be also signified in person, or by writing, where it is practicable, or may be reasonably obtained.

And no monthly meeting ought to permit any marriages to be proposed in the said meeting, sooner than a year after the death of husband or wife.

All marriages contrary to our order to be testified against.

It is the sense of this meeting, that if any member do join in marriage with such as are not in membership with us, or in any other way than with the consent and approbation of the monthly meeting, they should be dealt with agreeably to our discipline, and, if not brought to a sense of their error, disowned.

No misdemeanor to be treasured up.

On serious consideration concerning marriages, this meeting being tender in that respect, advises, that no misdemeanor be treasured up, against a person until the time of presenting marriage, and then started, though perhaps long before done, and known to those who so object to it at that time, which is a wrong thing, and should be checked and discouraged in all meetings.

Parties intending marriage not to reside in the same house.

It is recommended to monthly meetings, that according to the ancient decent practice amongst Friends, they take care that such men and wo-

men Friends who make suit or proposals of marriage one to the other, do not dwell in the same house, from the time that they begin to be so concerned, until the marriage is accomplished.

Marriages not to be accomplished at monthly meetings or on first days.

Advised, that marriages be not accomplished in or immediately after any of our monthly meetings, or other meetings of business, or on first days. And it is desired that, on these occasions, Friends in affluent circumstances, particularly, may be careful to set a becoming and encouraging example of moderation; and that all may avoid unnecessarily expensive entertainments and large companies, and especially guard against inviting such as guests, who are unlikely to conform to the order of our religious society.

Moderation to be observed.

No suit in order to marriage with persons not in membership or servants, &c. without leave.

Let such of our members be admonished, who keep company, in order for marriage, with persons not of our society; or with any bound servants or apprentices, without the leave of their masters or mistresses; or who are either present themselves, or consent to their children being present at marriages of those not in membership, which are accomplished by the assistance of a priest. And where any are present at the marriage of a member, accomplished either by the official interference of a priest, or in any other way out of our comely order, they are to be dealt with, and where they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, let them be testified against.

Attending marriages of members out of our order, to be testified against.

Consent not to be retracted without satisfactory reasons.

It is the judgment of this meeting, that where parents or guardians have approved the visits or addresses of a man (a member of our religious society) to any of their children or those under their care, that they do not retract the same, without giving such reasons as shall be satisfactory to the monthly meeting whereto they belong.

Order prescribed for the accomplishment of marriage.

For the accomplishment of marriage, it is directed that the following order be observed.... If both the parties belong to the same monthly meeting, the men's and women's monthly meetings should be informed of their intentions; and the man at a proper time be accompanied into the women's meeting, by a suitable Friend nominated thereto....there the parties are first to declare, that "With Divine permission, and Friends' approbation, they intend marriage with each other"....whereupon, two women Friends should be appointed by minute to make the usual inquiry respecting the woman; and then proceeding to the men's meeting, they should repeat (or make) the same declaration there, and two men Friends be in like manner appointed to inquire concerning the man. If the parties have parents or guardians present, their consent should be expressed; or, if the man is a member of another monthly meeting, the consent of his parents, if he have any, should be produced in writing, either then or at the next meeting, with a certificate from his monthly meeting of his clearness from other like engagements. If the

woman be a widow having children, two or more friends should be appointed in the meeting of which she is a member, to see that the rights of her children are legally secured. At the next meeting, if the committees report that careful enquiry has been made, and no obstruction to the further proceeding of the parties appears, the meeting is to leave them at liberty to accomplish their marriage according to our rules, and appoint two Friends of each sex, to attend and see that good order is observed.

Careful inquiry and clear report to be made.

Overseers to be appointed.

It is further advised, that the said marriage be accomplished decently, gravely, and weightily; and that the parties themselves, their parents and others concerned, do take care at the houses or places where they go after the meeting is over, that no reproach arise, or occasion of offence be given, by any intemperate or immoderate feasting or drinking, or by any unseemly, wanton, or rude discourses or actions; but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God; and that the company retire to their homes in seasonable time. And if any thing to the contrary is observed, the overseers, or other concerned Friends present, ought as speedily as they conveniently can, to take such aside who make any breach upon good order, and in brotherly love admonish them to a better behaviour; and the said overseers are to make report to the next monthly meeting, whether this advice con-

Intemperance or immoderate feasting, &c to be guarded against.

Overseers to make faithful report.

cerning decency and order be observed, and take care that the marriage certificate be recorded.

The form of which certificate shall be as follows....

Whereas, A. B. of....., in the county of....., in....., son of C. B. of..... and H. his wife; and D. E. daughter of F. E. of..... and M. his wife, having declared their intentions of marriage with each other, before a monthly meeting of the religious society of Friends, held at ...., according to the good order used among them [*where the parties are under the care of parents or guardians add*] and having consent of parents or guardians concerned (*as the case is*) their said proposal of marriage was allowed of by the said meeting. Now these are to certify whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishment of their said intentions, this .....day of the.....month, in the year of our Lord....., they, the said A. B. and D. E. appeared in a public meeting of the said people, held at.....aforesaid; and the said A. B. taking the said D. E. by the hand, did, on this solemn occasion, openly declare, that he took her, the said D. E. to be his wife, promising, with Divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband until death should separate them; and then, in the same assembly,

Form of the certificate.

the said D. E. did in like manner declare, that she took him, the said A. B. to be her husband, promising, with Divine assistance to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death should separate them. And moreover, they, the said A. B. and D. E. (she according to the custom of marriage, assuming the name of her husband) did as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

And we whose names are also hereunto subscribed, being present at the solemnization of the said marriage and subscription, have, as witnesses thereto, set our hands the day and year above written.

A. B.

D. B.

Marriage between first cousins and with wife's half sister, disallowed.

That the marriage of persons too near akin may, as much as in us lies, be prevented, this meeting concludes, that no marriage between first-cousins, nor between a man and his deceased wife's half sister, shall be permitted among us; and that, where any person or persons so circumstanced shall intermarry, their so doing shall be considered as a relinquishment of their connection with the society, and they be accordingly disowned by the monthly meetings of which they are members. And it is further concluded, that, if any such persons shall afterwards apply to the monthly meeting which disowned him or her for reinstatement, the said meeting is not to accede to the proposal, until the case shall be repre-

Quarterly meetings consent necessary previous to reinstatement.

sented to the quarterly meeting, and its consent obtained, after being well assured that the parties are brought to a due sense of their transgression, manifested by uprightness of life and conversation.

It is advised that parents exercise a religious care in watching over their children, and endeavour to guard them against improper or unequal connections in marriage; that they be not anxious to obtain for them large portions and settlements, but that they be joined with persons of religious inclinations, suitable dispositions and diligence in their business, which are necessary to a comfortable life in a married state.

The increase of the breaches of our testimony, in going from amongst us in the weighty engagement of marriage, being often for want of due care in parents, and those who have the important charge of educating the youth under their trust, early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of truth, and impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them; as much as possible restraining them from such company as is likely to entangle their affections in an improper manner; we therefore tenderly advise Friends in all quarters to an increasing care over the youth, that the consistency of our principles in all respects with the nature of true religion, may be impressed on their tender minds, by upright examples, as well as by precepts; and

Increasing care towards the youth advised.

that where there is apparent danger of the affections of any being improperly entangled and the care of parents or guardians, or those who have their oversight, appears not sufficient to prevent their taking imprudent steps in the accomplishment of marriage, care be taken, timely to apply for the help of their friends.

Parents consenting to or conniving at childrens transgressing the discipline to be testified against.

Monthly meetings are authorised to give forth testimonies of denial against such parents or guardians who consent to, connive at, or encourage the marriages of their children and those under their care (members of our religious society) contrary to the good order established amongst us; if after Christian and brotherly labour with them, they cannot be brought to a due sense of their error, and a satisfactory acknowledgement of the same.

MEETING HOUSES.

It is recommended to quarterly and monthly meetings to make timely and careful inspection into the situation of the titles of meeting houses, burial grounds, and other estates which have been vested in trustees, and by them held for the use and benefit of the society at large, or of any of those meetings; so that if it should appear needful by the death of any such trustees or otherwise, due and seasonable care may be taken to appoint some others to the trust; that future difficulties and the risk of being deprived of such estates may be avoided. And it is further recommended that quarterly and monthly meetings respectively as the case may require, keep exact records of all such trusts and conveyances, and also that a clear and regular account be kept by each respective meeting, of the place where, and the persons with whom the papers, minutes and records belonging to our religious society are from time to time deposited; wherein due care should be taken to lodge them with suitable Friends.

Timely care advised for renewal of trusts.

And a regular account to be kept in each meeting.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

Institution of the meeting.

IN order that this yearly meeting with its several branches, might be properly represented in the intervals thereof, on emergent occasions, a meeting was instituted anno 1756, by the name of the "Meeting for Sufferings;" which it was agreed should consist of twelve Friends appointed by the yearly meeting (living in or near Philadelphia, for the convenience of getting soon together) and also of four Friends chosen out of each of the quarterly meetings; who were directed to meet together in Philadelphia forthwith, for the regulation of its future meetings, which are subject to the following rules:

Its services and duties.

First. The said meeting shall keep fair minutes of all its proceedings, and annually lay them before the yearly meeting.

Second. No less number than twelve of the members attending shall constitute a meeting capable of transacting any business.

Third. On all occasions of uncommon importance, previous notice thereof shall be given or sent to all the members.

Fourth. In case of the decease of any Friend or Friends, nominated either by the yearly meeting or quarterly meetings, or of their declining or neglecting their attendance for the space of twelve months, the meeting for sufferings (if it be thought expedient) may choose others in his or their stead, to serve to the time of the next yearly meeting, or till the places of those who have represented the quarterly meetings shall be supplied by new appointments.

Fifth. The said meeting may sit on its own adjournments, and order these, as well as the times of its stated meetings (if these do not exceed three months) according to the business before them.

Sixth. The said meeting is not to meddle with any matter of faith or discipline, which has not been determined by the yearly meeting.

The further services confided to the said meeting for sufferings, are:

First. In general to represent this yearly meeting, and to appear on its behalf in any cases where the interest or reputation of our religious society may render it needful. Further services.

Second. To take the oversight and inspection of all writings proposed to be printed relative to our religious principles or testimonies;

and to promote or suppress the same at their discretion; also to print and distribute any writings already published by the society, or which may be offered for inspection as aforesaid, and approved.

Third. To inspect and explain titles to land, or other estate, belonging to any of our meetings; also charitable legacies and donations; and to give such advice respecting the same as may appear to be necessary.

Fourth. To receive from the several quarterly meetings their annual accounts of sufferings, and also such memorials concerning deceased Friends as those meetings may have concurred with: that when examined and approved they may be laid before the yearly meeting.

Fifth. To extend such advice and assistance to any individuals under sufferings for our testimonies, as their cases may require; and, if necessary, to apply to the government, or persons in authority, on their behalf.

Sixth. To correspond with the meeting for sufferings in London or elsewhere, on the common concerns of the society.

On solid consideration it is agreed that though none are properly members of the meeting for sufferings, but such who are ap-

pointed by this yearly meeting, or by the several quarterly meetings; yet, that approved ministers, and members of any other meeting for sufferings corresponding with this, be permitted to attend when they be inclined so to do.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

DEAR Friends, keep all your meetings in the authority, wisdom, and power of truth, and unity of the blessed Spirit; and the God of peace be with you. And it is advised, that such as come late to meetings, or, when there fall asleep, or are restless, or do not stay in the meeting, but go forth unnecessarily, or otherwise demean themselves unbecoming our holy profession on those solemn occasions, be tenderly and seasonably admonished.

Unbecoming behaviour in meetings requires admonition.

We exhort all to a Christian exercise and zeal in the performance of worship to Almighty God; and as we are not capable in our own strength to perform this great duty, we recommend to a diligent waiting in true silence and retirement of mind, for the renewed sense of the inward power and virtue of his Spirit, whereby we shall be qualified to worship him in an acceptable manner. Let our faithfulness and sincerity herein appear, by the humility, meekness and circumspection of our lives and conversation, adorning the doctrines and principles of truth, as they were declared by Christ and his

Zeal in the performance of divine worship recommended.

apostles: those who have been preserved in faithfulness therein, having to testify from that experience which cannot deceive, that it hath been very profitable; and therefore cannot be easy without encouraging and putting forward their children, apprentices and servants to this religious duty, as well as other behaviour suitable thereunto. And if this useful practice was more generally attended to, it would do more for us and them than any outward acquisition of wealth; and without doubt, some of those who have been placed under our direction, may with thankfulness have to view our pious care in taking them from worldly business to seek a city eternal in the heavens.

This meeting recommends, that Friends who are exercised in the discipline, would early extend their brotherly love and care, in visiting such amongst us who neglect their duty in attending our meetings for public worship. And as a wilful neglect of this important duty is a manifest evidence of ingratitude to the Divine Being, contrary to the example and practice of the primitive believers in Christ, and our religious testimony: it is the sense of this meeting, that as such who are thus insensible of their religious duty, disunite themselves from Christian fellowship with Friends, monthly meetings after having fully discharged their duty towards them, and finding their endeavours to reclaim

Wilful neglect of this incumbent duty to be testified against.

them ineffectual, should testify our disunion with them.

Drowsiness in meetings, one cause of stumbling to sober inquirers.

As the minds of many are turned towards Friends, and the apppearance of a drowsy spirit in our religious meetings, is offensive, and may be a cause of stumbling to sober inquirers, it is earnestly desired that this weakness may not exist among us, and as indulgence therein must necessarily have a disqualifying effect, it is the sense and judgment of this meeting, that quarterly, monthly, and other meetings should be cautious of employing such members in the weighty services of the discipline.

MEMORIALS.

QUARTERLY and monthly meetings are directed to furnish this meeting annually with an account of the decease of such of their members in the station of ministers or elders, as may have taken place within the year. And if any monthly meeting should under solid consideration, believe it necessary to prepare a memorial concerning any deceased Friend who had been a member thereof, it is to go to the respective quarterly meeting, where, being duly weighed and agreed to, it is then to be forwarded to the meeting for sufferings, for inspection and approbation, previous to its being laid before this meeting.

Account of the decease of ministers and elders to be forwarded.

Memorials prepared are to be sent to the meeting for sufferings.

MINISTERS AND ELDERS, AND MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

Nursing fathers in the truth to extend due care in love and tenderness.

IT is our earnest desire, that both ministers and elders may be as nursing fathers and mothers to those that are young in the ministry, and with all care and diligence advise and admonish them, and if they see occasion, reprove them in a tender and Christian spirit, according to the rules of our discipline and counsel of Friends in that respect; also exhort them frequently to read the holy scriptures, and earnestly seek the mind of the Spirit of truth, to open the mysteries thereof, that, abiding in a simple and patient submission to the will of God, and keeping down to the openings of divine love and life in themselves, they may witness a gradual growth in their gifts, and be preserved from extending their declarations further than they find the life and power of truth to bear them up.

Ministers misapplying or drawing unsound inferences from the scriptures;

And our advice to all our ministers is, that they be frequent in reading the scriptures of the old and new testaments; and if any in the course of their ministry, shall misapply, or draw unsound inferences or wrong conclusions from

the text, or shall misbehave themselves in point of conduct or conversation, let them be admonished in love and tenderness by the elders or overseers where they live, and if they prove refractory and refuse to acknowledge their faults, let them be further dealt with, in the wisdom of truth, as the case may require.

Or for misbehaviour to be admonished.

As the occasion of our religious meetings is solemn, a care should ever be maintained to guard against any thing that would tend to disorder or confusion therein. When any think they have aught against what is publicly delivered, they should speak to the party privately and orderly; and if any shall oppose a ministring Friend in his or her preaching or exhortation, or keep on the hat or show any remarkable dislike to such when engaged in prayer, let them be speedily admonished in such manner as may be requisite, unless the person against whom the uneasiness is expressed has been disowned by a monthly meeting, or his or her public appearances disapproved by the elders.

Decency and order to be maintained in all our meetings.

Public opposition to ministers in unity, requires speedy admonition.

This meeting agrees that each monthly meeting choose two or more Friends of each sex to sit with the ministers, and they together to compose a meeting to be denominated a preparative meeting of ministers and elders; taking care that the Friends chosen for that service, be prudent, solid Friends, and that they do carefully discharge the trust confided to them.

Elders to be chosen.

Mode of appointing elders.

When there is occasion for the appointment of one or more elders in any meeting, the proposal of separating a committee to consider the subject, should be first made in a monthly meeting, and when there united with, a proper number of Friends should be appointed; and in this committee, the names of the persons who may be thought suitable, should be first mentioned, and, when concurred with, reported to the monthly meeting, without consulting the person or persons, or otherwise divulging it. If, upon due consideration, the nomination is approved, a minute should be made, and a copy thereof forwarded to the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.

Manner in which ministers are to be recommended.

When any Friend has frequently appeared in our religious meetings as a minister, and the preparative meeting of ministers and elders apprehends that it is seasonable the subject should claim the attention of the monthly meeting for discipline, of which the person is a member, they are at liberty to mention the matter, therein, and if the monthly meeting after deliberate consideration, should unite in believing that a gift in the ministry has been committed to him or her, a minute expressive thereof should be forwarded to the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, where, the case being solidly weighed, and the sense of the monthly meeting concurred with, information thereof should be sent to the preparative meeting of

ministers and elders, of which the party is to be a member. And until the approbation of the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders is obtained, no such Friend is to be received as a minister, nor permitted to sit in the meetings of ministers and elders, nor travel abroad as a minister. And no such approved minister is to appoint any meeting out of the limits of the quarterly meeting to which he or she belongs, without a certificate from the monthly meeting for discipline or the concurrence thereof.

Not to appoint meetings without monthly meeting's consent.

It is the judgment of this meeting that when any Friend appointed to the station of an elder believes him or herself called to the ministry, and shall have appeared frequently in that capacity in our public religious meetings, they should withdraw from the meetings of ministers and elders.

Elders appearing in the ministry to withdraw from select meetings.

When any approved minister apprehends it to be his or her duty to travel in truth's service out of the limits of their quarterly meeting, he or she is to open their concern in the monthly meeting to which they belong, and obtain a certificate or minute (as the occasion may be) of its unity and concurrence, directed to Friends within the parts proposed to be visited: And it is advised, that when the service is accomplished, the said meeting be informed thereof, and the certificate returned without unnecessary delay.

Ministers concerned to travel are to obtain certificates, or minutes,

And return them seasonably.

General religious visits beyond our limits to have the concurrence of a quarterly meeting.

Agreed that when any Friend is religiously concerned to make a general visit to the meetings of Friends or parts beyond the limits of this yearly meeting, and has obtained a certificate for that purpose from the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, that the concern be also laid before the respective quarterly meeting for its concurrence and indorsement, to be signed, if for a man, by the clerk of the men's meeting only; but, if for a woman, by the clerks of the men's and women's meetings.

The certificates to be endorsed.

The ministers and elders of each monthly meeting are to meet once in three months at such time and place as the monthly meeting may direct, in the capacity of a preparative meeting of ministers and elders; when, after a time of solid retirement, the queries addressed to such meetings are to be read and considered, and distinct answers made to them in writing, which, when signed by the clerk, are to be conveyed to the ensuing quarterly meeting of ministers and elders by two or more Friends to be mentioned in the report as representatives; but if, in the course of inquiry, any deficiency has appeared, care should be taken that it be remedied.

Preparative meetings of ministers and elders....how to be conducted.

Quarterly meeting of like kind, its services.

And in the said quarterly meetings, the queries are also to be read with the answers which are brought from their preparative meetings, and the state of the members weightily consi-

dered, that where occasion requires it, advice and counsel may be seasonably extended; and once a year those answers comprised in a written report and signed by the clerk, are to be forwarded to the yearly meeting of ministers and elders, by four or more Friends appointed as representatives: in this meeting the queries are also to be read with the answers from the several quarters, and the state of this part of the society being collected and considered, advices adapted thereto, may, if requisite, be issued to the subordinate meetings of the like kind. This meeting is to appoint a suitable number of elders to take the oversight of the meetings for worship held in Philadelphia during the time of the yearly meeting. And such ministers as propose to go in truth's service beyond sea, after obtaining a certificate of the concurrence of the monthly meeting, indorsed by the respective quarter, are to spread their concerns before the yearly meeting of ministers and elders, and produce the said certificates; and, if upon solid consideration, the same are united with, a certificate thereof signed by the clerk should be granted.

Yearly meeting of ministers and elders.

Ministers having religious engagements to cross the seas, are to submit their concerns to the consideration of this meeting.

None of the said meetings of ministers and elders are in any wise to interfere with the business of any meeting for discipline, nor is the yearly meeting of ministers and elders to suffer its adjournments to interfere with the sittings of the yearly meeting for discipline.

No meeting of ministers and elders to interfere with the business of meetings for discipline.

We tenderly recommend faithful Friends, and especially ministers and elders, to watch over the flock of Christ in their respective places and stations, always approving themselves by their pious examples in conversation and conduct, to be such as faithfully and diligently walk up to the testimony of the blessed truth whereunto the Lord hath gathered us in this his gospel day.

Members of meetings of ministers and elders losing their service may be displaced.

And if any acknowledged member of our meetings of ministers and elders shall at any time be thought, by negligence, unfaithfulness, or otherwise, to have lost his or her service in that station, so as to become the subject of uneasiness and burthensome (yet not so as to be under the care of a meeting of discipline on that account or for misconduct) it is advised that a timely and tender care be extended to such person according to gospel order; first by the individuals concerned, and then by the preparative meeting of ministers and elders to which he or she may belong; should these labours prove unavailing, report of the case should be made by that meeting to the quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, and there a few Friends be deputed to assist the said preparative meeting in a further extension of labour with the party: If this also prove unavailing, and on report thereof to the said quarterly meeting, it appears that the said preparative meeting has fully discharged its duty to the individual, the case should then be transmitted to the monthly meeting for disci-

pline of which the party is a member, and left under its care; and he or she ought from that time to refrain from attending any such select meetings until they shall be again recommended or appointed as at first.

MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE.

Idle company and evil practices to be avoided.

ADVISED that none accustom themselves to vain and idle company, sipping and tippling of drams and strong drink; for though such who use that evil practice may not suddenly become drunken to the greatest degree, yet they often thereby become like ground fitted for the seeds of the greatest transgressions, and some who have had the good example of virtuous parents, have from small beginnings arrived to a shameful excess, to their ruin, the great injury of their wives and families, and the scandal of the religious profession they have made.

Giving or receiving strong liquors at vendues to be testified against.

It having been observed that a pernicious custom has prevailed upon people, of giving rum and other strong liquors to excite some to bid at vendues to advance the price, which, besides the injustice of the artifice, is scandalous, and leads to intemperance and disorder; it is therefore the unanimous sense of this meeting to caution Friends against the same. And if any under our profession do fall into this evil practice, by giving or taking strong liquors at vendues, or countenance or promote any noisy ga-

therings, they should be speedily dealt with as disorderly persons, and if they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, disowned.

Many just and pertinent remarks being made in this meeting, clearly setting forth the corrupting, debasing, and ruinous effects consequent on the importation and retailing large quantities of distilled spirits, whereby the intemperate use of them is greatly aided and encouraged, to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more, and increasing vice and dissolution in the land, wherewith many religiously attentive minds have been long painfully burthened; it is the united sense of the meeting, that well concerned Friends in all quarters, be earnestly excited to suffer the affecting importance of this mighty evil, religiously to impress their minds, and animate them with a lively concern to excite honest endeavours, both by example and loving entreaty to caution and dissuade all our members from being concerned in the importation or retailing distilled spirits, or giving countenance thereto.

Ruinous effects of distilled spirituous liquors.

It is affectionately recommended, that Friends be careful to use moderation on account of marriages, births and burials, and on all other occasions; a departure from which being a cause of stumbling to many, and a great obstruction to a more full reformation, as well as attended with other evil consequences, tending to obscure that

Moderation at marriages, &c. recommended.

light which we have to hold up to others, and should have more abundantly, if we were faithful; lessening that savour which we ought ever carefully to preserve, agreeably to the monition of the holy apostle, "Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand." Phil. iv. 5. And as the all-seeing eye beholds our thoughts, and views us in all our ways and actions, what manner of men ought we to be in all godliness of life, and sobriety of deportment.

Distillation of spirits from grain, cause of disownment.

And if any should distil spirits out of grain or retail such liquors, monthly meetings should deal with them as with other offenders, and if they cannot be prevailed with to desist from such a practice, be at liberty to declare their disunity with them.

NEGROES OR SLAVES.

It appears to have been the concern of this meeting revived from time to time, with increasing weight, to testify their entire disunity with the practice of enslaving mankind (and particularly to guard all in membership with us against being concerned in the purchase of slaves from the coasts of Africa) yet as we have with sorrow to observe that in some parts of our country, this shameful practice is still continued and connived at, we think it proper to revive the advices heretofore issued; and again exhort our members, to be no way accessary to this enormous national evil, but to discourage it by all the justifiable means in their power; it being obvious that wherever it prevails it tends to corrupt the morals of the people, so as not only to render them obnoxious to the displeasure of the Almighty, but deaf to his warnings, and insensible and regardless of his impending judgments.

Entire disunity with slavery.

And we earnestly desire it may become the concern of our members generally, to use the influence they have with those who hold slaves by inheritance or otherwise, that they may be

This oppressed class of men to be instructed, advised and assisted.

treated with moderation and kindness, and instructed as objects of the common salvation in the principles of the Christian religion; as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their several neighbourhoods advise and assist such of the black people as are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns.

Hiring slaves opposes our religious testimony.

Understanding that some in membership with us, either through inadvertence, or from selfish motives, have hired slaves to assist them in their business; we desire such to consider that in so doing they promote the unrighteous traffic, and oppose our testimony against it.

Caution to executors and administrators.

Friends are also cautioned against acting as executors or administrators to estates where slaves are bequeathed; and doing any thing whereby their bondage may be prolonged.

State of the black people requires close attention to the opening of truth, that our duty may be fully discharged.

We are united in judgment, that the state of the black people, who have been held as slaves by any of us or our predecessors, calls for a deep inquiry and close examination, how far we are clear of with holding from them, whatunder such an exercise may be opened to our view as their just right; and we earnestly and affectionately entreat those in particular who have released any of them, to attend to the further open-

ings of duty. Even if no such obligations to this people existed among us, it is worthy of our serious consideration, whether any object of beneficence is more deserving of our regard, than that of training up their youth in such virtuous principles and habits as may render them useful and respectable members of the community.

Friends who import, sell, purchase or give away slaves, to be disowned.

It is the sense and judgment of this meeting, that if any of our members are concerned in importing, selling, or purchasing; or shall give away or transfer any negro or other slave, with or without any other consideration than to clear their estate of any future incumbrance, or in such manner that their bondage is continued beyond the time limited by law or custom for white persons; and also those who accept of such gift or assignment; they ought to be speedily treated with in the spirit of true love and wisdom, and the iniquity of their conduct laid before them. And if, after Christian labour, they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice, as to do every thing which the monthly meeting shall judge to be reasonable and necessary for the restoring such slave to his or her natural and just right to liberty, and condemn their deviation from the law of righteousness and equity, to the satisfaction of the said meeting, that such member or members be testified against as other transgressors are by the rules of

our discipline for other immoral, unjust, or reproachful conduct.

Traffic in slaves displeasing to the Almighty.

It appearing that, notwithstanding the many afflictive dispensations with which divine wisdom has seen meet to visit this land, many of its inhabitants are so deaf to the language of the rod, as to continue in the nefarious traffic for slaves to the coasts of Africa: and that the importation of them is still connived at: this meeting, considering such a conduct as a bold and impious defiance of the Ruler of nations, and pregnant with the most alarming consequences to our country, earnestly recommends to the meeting for sufferings to embrace every suitable opportunity for advancing our testimony in this respect, and for calling the attention of the public mind to this awfully interesting subject.

OATHS.

ADVISED that our Christian testimony be faithfully maintained against the burthen and imposition of oaths, according to the express command of Christ, and the injunction of the apostle James, viz. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne: nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black: but let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Mat. v. 33 to 37.

Testimony founded on the command of Christ.

"But above all things my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." James v. 12.

From the year 1718 to 1771, divers minutes of this meeting appear, declaring that oaths ad-

Oaths administered by clerks, &c a violation of the testimony.

ministered by clerks or others, under the notice and connivance of Friends, either in court or elsewhere, violate our ancient testimony. And it is earnestly recommended to quarterly and monthly meetings, that where any under our name are parties to the administration of oaths, to be careful to proceed in dealing with them; and if they will not decline the practice and give suitable satisfaction to the meeting they belong to, to testify against them agreeably to the rules of our discipline.

Parties to their administration to be disowned.

Disunion with offenders directed.

As it is our duty to support our Christian testimony against oaths, faithful Friends are desired to extend brotherly labour towards those who deviate therefrom, and if such labour proves unsuccessful, monthly meetings should testify their disunity with them.

Members not to be elected to stations which subject to a violation of this testimony.

And Friends in all places are exhorted carefully to avoid electing or promoting their brethren to such stations in civil government as may subject them to the temptation of violating this testimony; and where any members shew an inclination or desire of soliciting or accepting of such offices, timely care should be taken to caution them against it. And in the execution of instruments of writing requiring witnesses, it is recommended that Friends endeavour to procure such persons for this purpose, as will attest the same by affirmation.

OVERSEERS.

IT is recommended that in every monthly meeting a proper number of faithful and judicious men and women belonging to each of the particular or preparative meetings, be appointed to the station of overseers within the same: whose duty it is to exercise a vigilant and tender care over their fellow members; that if any thing repugnant to the harmony and good order of the society appears among them, it may be timely attended to and not neglected. And to prevent the introduction of all unnecessary and premature complaints to meetings of business, it is advised if any member shall have cause of complaint against another, that it be mentioned to the overseers, who are to see that the party complained of has been treated with according to gospel order, previously to the case being reported to the preparative or monthly meeting. And it is desired that in dealing with any, it be done in the spirit of meekness and love, patiently endeavouring to instruct and advise them; which, if ineffectual, the preparative meeting should be informed thereof; that, if needful the case may be laid before the monthly meeting,

A suitable number of each sex to be appointed.

Their duty.

To be performed in a christian spirit.

Appointment of a committee once in three years.

of which, notice should be given to the party, when it can be conveniently done. It is further recommended to our monthly meetings that a committee be appointed at least once in three years, or as much oftener as the occasion may require, to consider the propriety of changing the overseers and bringing forward in the improvement of their gifts, other Friends on whom a concern for the welfare of the society rests. And we tenderly exhort all our members who may be rightly called into this or any other service of the church, not hastily to excuse themselves therefrom, but solidly to ponder the weighty advice of the apostle, "Feed the flock of "God, which is among you, taking the oversight "thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not "for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither "as lords over God's heritage; but being en- "samples to the flock: and when the chief Shep- "herd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of "glory, that fadeth not away."

Serious exhortation to a due discharge of the weighty trust.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

In much love to the rising generation, we exhort them to avoid the many vanities and ensnaring corruptions to which they are exposed. Bear in mind, dear youth, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and that "a good understanding have all they who do his commandments." Psalm. xci. 10. Take the advice of godly parents, guardians and friends; ever remembering that, next to our Creator, children ought to obey their parents, and that disobedience to them is a breach of the moral law, and was always offensive in the Divine sight. Submit to their reasonable requirings with cheerfulness, though these may sometimes thwart your own inclinations, and answer them not frowardly or crossly. They watched over you and took care of you, when you were utterly unable to help or care for yourselves. Why then should any of you grieve and wound their still anxious minds by a conduct which (because of its tendency to obstruct your welfare and happiness) you know they cannot approve? Such as, running into vain and expensive fashions, associating with corrupt and libertine persons; frequenting taverns and places of diversion; wasting your precious time in idle

The rising generation exhorted to avoid ensnaring corruptions.

discourse, and drawing the affections and inflaming the passions one of another; all which we have nodoubt the divine Monitor in your own breasts often pleads with you against, and shews to be destructive of your peace. We beseech you, as fathers, to attend to this heavenly Instructor, and dutifully yield to the correspondent tender advice of your friends. Shrink not from the cross of Christ in your garb, language or manners; but, through a subjection of your wills to the divine will, in these and all other respects, walk answerably to the purity of our profession, and the simplicity and spirituality of our worship: so may you be instructive examples to serious enquirers after truth; and not of those who, under a profession thereof, are preferring their own crooked ways, and turning others aside from the footteps of its followers.

Youth disregarding the care of parents and friends are exposed to many evils.

It is advised that where the pious exercise of parental care and authority is disregarded, and any of the youth in membership with us appear obstinately determined to run into and copy after the vain and extravagant fashions of the world in their dress and address, exposing themselves to the corrupting influence of evil company and excesses, whereby designing persons may entangle their affections, and draw them into unsuitable and unhappy connections in marriage or otherwise, that such be timely and tenderly treated with, and shown the dan-

gerous tendency of their conduct; and, if they cannot be prevailed with to desist therefrom, and amend their ways, they ought to be dealt with by their respective preparative or monthly meetings, as in other cases of offence; and if, after due expostulation and forbearance, they prove irreclaimable, they may be testified against.

Such to be dealt with, and if irreclaimable to be disowned.

And if any parents in membership with us, willingly indulge their children, or youth under their care in such extravagance, liberties and excesses, as are here pointed out, and persist in vindicating their conduct, they ought in like manner to be treated with and disowned.

Parents indulging and vindicating the extravagance of their children, to be disowned.

Friends are advised to bring up their children to habits of industry, placing them with sober and exemplary members of the society, for instruction in such occupations as are consistent with our religious principles and testimonies, that as far as in us lies they may be preserved in a becoming conduct and demeanour.

Children to be inured to industry, and placed with exemplary Friends.

And it is desired that those whose circumstances may furnish with ability for instructing, in useful and suitable employments, the children of members who are in situations less affluent, may receive them into their families upon terms so moderate and equitable as to remove every plausible reason for placing them with those not in membership with us.

Children of the poor to be received upon moderate terms.

PLAINNESS.

Corrupt manners and fashions to be avoided.

Advised, that all Friends, both old and young, keep out of the world's corrupt language, manners, vain and needless things and fashions, in apparel, buildings, and furniture of houses, some of which are immodest, indecent, and unbecoming. And that they avoid immoderation in the use of lawful things, which though innocent in themselves, may thereby become hurtful; also such kinds of stuffs, colours and dress, as are calculated more to please a vain and wanton mind, than for real usefulness; and let tradesmen and others, members of our religious society, be admonished, that they be not accessary to these evils; for we ought to take up our daily cross, minding the grace of God which brings salvation, and teaches to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world, that we may adorn the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things; so may we feel his blessing, and be instrumental in his hand for the good of others.

Caution to tradesmen and others.

We tenderly exhort all, seriously to consider the plainness and simplicity which the gospel en-

joins, and to manifest it in their speech, apparel, furniture, salutations and conversation, into which our forefathers were led by the Spirit of Christ, in conformity with his precepts and example; and for which they patiently suffered long imprisonments, and great persecutions; being convinced that it was their duty thus to bear a testimony against the vain spirit of the world.

Gospel simplicity recommended.

The spirit of truth, which led our ancients to lay aside every thing unbecoming the followers of Christ, still leads in the same path, all who submit to its guidance; we therefore earnestly entreat all Friends to watch over themselves in this respect. The example of our blessed Saviour, his immediate followers, and of virtuous and holy men in all ages, ought to make a due impression on every considerate mind; and especially on such as have had the advantage of a guarded education.

Truth leads to plainness.

We also tenderly advise, that Friends take heed, especially those who should be exemplary to others under their care, that they exercise plainness of speech without respect of persons, in all their converse among men; and not balk their testimony by a cowardly compliance, varying their language according to their company; a practice of very ill example, rendering those who use it contemptible, and looked

Testimony balked by varying the speech to suit that of others.

upon as a kind of hypocrites, even by those with whom they so comply; this seems to be cautioned against by the apostle, when he advises, 1 Tim. "That the deacons be grave, not double tongued;" plainly importing that it is inconsistent with the gravity of the gospel.

POOR.

IT is advised that the cases of all our members who are in indigent circumstances be duly inspected, that advice and relief may be seasonably extended, and assistance afforded to them in such business as they are capable of: and in order to defray the expenses which their support and the education of their children will necessarily occasion, it is recommended to each monthly meeting of men and women Friends to be open hearted and liberal in subscriptions for raising and continuing funds for these purposes; that the meetings of each sex should appoint a treasurer to receive the same, and a committee of suitable Friends to have the particular care of the poor, whose business it will be to visit, inspect into their wants, and relieve them. And in the exercise of this benevolent care, it is desired we may always guard against exposing the names or situations of our fellow members. And an appointment should be annually made of two or more Friends for settling the treasurer's account, and reporting its state to the meeting.

Advice and assistance to be afforded.

Funds to be raised.

Treasurer to be appointed.

Situation of our fellow-members not to be exposed.

PRIESTS' WAGES; OR HIRELING MINISTRY.

Gospel ministry the immediate production of the holy Spirit, and the service is to be freely discharged.

LET us keep in remembrance, that it is under the immediate teaching and influence of the holy Spirit that all acceptable worship is performed, and all true gospel ministry supplied; that this pure and powerful influence, in vessels sanctified and prepared by the divine hand, is the essential qualification to that work; and that as the gift is divine, the service is freely and faithfully to be discharged, without any view to reward from man.

Violation of this testimony to be testified against.

And it is advised that where any of our members are so regardless of this testimony as to contribute to the support of an hireling ministry, and vindicate such conduct, that they be tenderly laboured with to convince them of their error, but if this prove ineffectual, and they persist in their unfaithfulness, the monthly meetings to which they belong should proceed to declare our disunity with them, such conduct being opposed to our testimony for the free ministry of the gospel, which is "without money and without price."

QUERIES.

It is agreed that the nine queries belonging to meetings for discipline, be read, deliberately considered and answered in each preparative and monthly meeting once a year; in order to convey an explicit account in writing to the quarterly meetings next preceding the yearly meeting that so this meeting may be clearly informed of the state of all our meetings.

All the queries relating to meetings for discipline, to be read and answered once a year.

Also, that the first, second and eighth of those queries be read, considered, and explicit answers to them made in writing in the two quarterly meetings preceding the one before mentioned, and also in the preparative and monthly meetings which report thereto. But none of the queries are to be read or answered in those quarterly meetings for discipline which immediately succeed the yearly meeting nor in the preparative or monthly meetings which report to those quarters.

Three queries to be read and answered twice a year.

It is not considered as obligatory on any meeting to read the above queries oftener than is here mentioned, or to read any others than such as are to be answered. Nor is the read-

Queries to be read only when answered.

ing and answering of them enjoined on any preparative meeting, where the members of that and the monthly meeting are the same.

It is further agreed that at the time when the nine queries are read in the preparative and monthly meetings, the advices and caution subjoined, shall be also distinctly read and solidly pondered; as a means of putting the members present upon considering, whether there be any occasion for an extension of care in those respects: and, if there is, of stirring them up to a faithful discharge of their duty as individuals, one towards another.

Advice and caution to be read once a year.

First Query. Are all our religious meetings for worship and discipline duly attended; is the hour observed; and are friends preserved from sleeping, and all other unbecoming behaviour therein?

Second Query. Is love and unity maintained amongst you. Are tale-bearing and detraction discouraged. And where any differences arise, are endeavours used speedily to end them?

Third Query. Are Friends careful to bring up those under their direction, in plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel; in frequent reading the holy scriptures; and to restrain them from reading pernicious books, and from the corrupt conversation of the world?

Fourth Query. Are Friends careful to discourage the unnecessary distillation or use of spirituous liquors, frequenting taverns and places of diversion; and to keep in true moderation and temperance on the account of births, marriages, burials and other occasions?

Fifth Query. Are poor Friends necessities duly inspected, and they relieved or assisted in such business as they are capable of. Do their children freely partake of learning to fit them for business: And are they and other Friends children placed among Friends?

Sixth Query. Do you maintain a faithful testimony against oaths; an hireling ministry; bearing arms, training, and other military services; being concerned in any fraudulent or clandestine trade; buying or vending goods so imported,or prize goods; and against encouraging lotteries of any kind?

Seventh Query. Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances, and to keep to moderation in their trade or business: Are they punctual to their promises, and just in the payment of their debts; and are such as give reasonable grounds for fear on these accounts timely laboured with for their preservation or recovery?

Eighth Query. Do you take due care regularly to deal with all offenders in the spirit of meekness, without partiality or unnecessary delay, in order for their help; and where such labour is ineffectual, to place judgment upon them in the authority of truth?

Ninth Query. Is due care taken to keep a regular record of births and burials?

And in the preparative and monthly meetings, when all the foregoing queries are read and answered, the following advices are to be read with a suitable pause between them:

That no young or single persons make or encourage proposals of marriage with each other without consent of parents or guardians, or keep company with those who are not of our religious society, upon that account; and if parents give their consent to, or connive at their children's thus keeping company, or marrying, that they be dealt with according to our discipline: And if any of our members have been present at marriages accomplished contrary to the rules of our discipline, that they also be dealt with.

That all public gifts and legacies be strictly applied to the uses intended by the donors; or, if any unforeseen occurrence should render such compliance difficult or impracticable, that an early application be made to the meeting for

sufferings for its advice or assistance; and that timely care be taken for the renewal of trusts.

That Friends intending removal be careful to apply for certificates; and that the cases of such who remove without certificates, or of sojourners coming from other places and appearing as Friends, without producing certificates, be properly attended to.

That Friends carefully inspect the state of their affairs once in the year; and make their wills and settle their outward estates whilst in health.

And it is further recommended that in conducting the affairs of our meetings, Friends endeavour to manage them in the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus, with decency, forbearance and love of each other.

The following queries are also to be read, considered and answered once a year, in each monthly and quarterly meeting, and a report thereof made in writing to this meeting: and it is recommended that in answering the query respecting schools, monthly meetings furnish their respective quarters with particular accounts of the situation and circumstance of the several schools within their limits, and that the quarterly meetings convey to this meeting a summary statement thereof.

First Query. What ministers and elders deceased, and when?

Second Query. What new meeting houses built, or new meetings settled?

Third Query. Are there schools established for the education of our youth, under the care of teachers in membership with us, and superintended by committees appointed either in the monthly or preparative meetings?

Fourth Query. Are the queries addressed to the quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings read and answered therein as directed?

QUERIES FOR MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

IT is also concluded, that of the following four queries, formed for the use of the meetings of ministers and elders, the first three be read and distinctly answered in writing three times in a year, by each preparative meeting of that kind, to its respective quarterly meeting: and that all the said four queries shall be in like manner read and answered, by the preparative to their quarterly meetings next preceding the yearly meeting of ministers and elders; that the quarterly meetings may be enabled to transmit a clear and distinct statement of those answers to that meeting.

First Query. Are ministers and elders careful to attend meetings for divine worship, bringing their families with them. Do they diligently attend meetings for discipline, encouraging such of their families to this duty as are of proper age, and suitable deportment?

Second Query. Are ministers sound in word and doctrine; careful to minister in the ability

which God gives, and thereby kept from burthening the living ?

Third Query. Are the lives and conversation of ministers and elders clean and blameless amongst men : are they in unity one with another, and with the meeting they belong to, harmoniously labouring together for truth's honour ?

Fourth Query. Are they good examples in uprightness, temperance and moderation ; and careful to train up their families in plainness of dress and simplicity of manners, becoming our religious profession ?

And it is earnestly and affectionately recommended, that ministers and elders watch over one another for good, to help those who are exercised in the ministry in the right line, discouraging forward spirits that run into words without life and power, advising against affectation of tones and gestures, and every thing that would hurt their service ; yet encouraging the humble careful traveller ; "speaking a word in season to them that are weary." And let all dwell in that which gives ability to labour successfully in the church of Christ, adorning the doctrine which they deliver to others, being examples of the Believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.

SCHOOLS.

THE education of our youth in piety and virtue, and giving them useful learning under the tuition of religious prudent persons, having for many years engaged the solid attention of this meeting, and advices thereon having been from time to time issued to the several subordinate meetings; it is renewedly desired, that quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings may be excited to proper exertions for the institution and support of schools; there being but little doubt, that as Friends are united, and cherish a disposition of liberality for the assistance of each other in this important work, they will be enabled to make such provision for the accommodation and residence of a teacher, with a family, as would be an encouragement to well qualified persons to engage in this arduous employment: for want of which it has been observed, that children have been committed to the care of transient persons, of doubtful character, and sometimes of very corrupt minds, by whose bad example and influence, they have been betrayed into principles and habits which have had an injurious effect on them in more advanced life. It

is therefore indispensably incumbent on us to guard them against this danger, and procure such tutors of our own religious persuasion, as are not only capable of instructing them in useful learning, to fit them for the business of this life, but to train them in the knowledge of their duty to God and one towards another. It is therefore proposed; *First.* That a lot of ground be provided in each monthly or preparative meeting, sufficient for a garden, orchard, grass for a cow, &c. and a suitable house erected thereon.

Second. That funds be raised by contribution, bequests, &c. in each meeting; the interest of which to be applied either in aid of the tutors salary or lessening the expense of Friends in straitened circumstances, in the education of their children.

Third. That a committee be appointed in each monthly or preparative meeting, to have the care of schools and the funds for their support, and that no tutor be employed but with their consent.

Although the raising a sufficiency to answer those purposes may in some places appear difficult, yet as improvements of this kind are generally gradual and have often arisen from small beginnings into very valuable establishments, it is desired that Friends may be encouraged

thereto, and keeping an eye to the divine blessing on their benevolent endeavours, make such essay for carrying into effect these recommendations as they may be enabled.

SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

WE tenderly and earnestly advise and exhort all parents and heads of families, that they endeavour to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion, as contained in the scriptures; and that they excite them to the diligent reading of those excellent writings, which plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death, and glorious resurrection, ascension and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to educate their children in the belief of those important truths, as well as in the belief of the inward manifestation and operation of the holy Spirit on their own minds, that they may reap the benefit and advantage thereof, for their own peace and everlasting happiness; which is infinitely preferable to all other considerations.

STOCK.

AGREED, that there be collections brought in from each quarterly, unto the next yearly meeting, for a yearly meeting stock, to defray the charges of the said meeting, according to the several agreements made or hereafter to be made. 1695.

Stock being necessary,

A stock having been generally kept, and by experience found useful, for the necessary occasions of the society, it is agreed, that the same be occasionally renewed by a collection from each quarter and that it be continued in the hands of the treasurer appointed by this meeting, and subject to be drawn out by its direction or by the meeting for sufferings, as the exigencies of society may require.

Is to be placed under care of a treasurer.

The sums which may be thought necessary, shall be raised by each quarter, in the proportions which may be ascertained by this meeting from time to time.

An arrangement of the quotas of the several quarterly meetings, produced by a commit-

tee appointed for that purpose was agreed to in 1804, as follows:

Quotas.

	£.	s.	£.
Philadelphia quarter to pay	16	0	in every 100
Abington . . do.	10	0	
Bucks . . . do.	10	0	
Concord . . do.	11	10	
Caln . . . . . do.	7	0	
Western . . . do.	10	10	
Southern . . . do.	4	0	
Burlington . . do.	10	10	
Haddonfield . do.	8	10	
Salem . . . . do.	7	0	
Shrewsbury and Rahway } do.	5	0	
	£. 100		

TAVERNS.

WE think it necessary to caution, not only the youth, but those of riper age, to avoid the unnecessary frequenting of taverns, and other places of public resort; that they be not exposed to noisy company, and unprofitable conversation; or betrayed into the use of strong liquors, by which so many have been corrupted both in principle and practice, to the ruin of themselves and their families. And if any are in danger on these accounts, it is desired that they may be timely and tenderly treated with in order to convince them of their danger.

Improper attendance at taverns injurious.

Considering the temptations and snares which they are exposed to, who keep houses of public entertainment or beer-houses, the corrupting influence of many who resort to them, and its effect on the children and families so exposed; it is the judgment of this meeting, that our members avoid engaging in such employments for a livelihood; and attend to the pointings of pure wisdom for that end.

Caution against keeping taverns

The unnecessary increase of them to be discouraged.

And it is desired, that Friends may endeavour, as far as their influence extends in the community, to prevent the unnecessary increase of taverns, and be cautious of signing petitions in behalf of those who may apply for licences on that account.

TESTIMONIES OF DENIAL AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

IT is the sense of this meeting that offenders inclining to make acknowledgment of their offences do prepare the same in writing, and if, on consulting the overseers or other judicious Friends, the purport appears suitable to the occasion, and the situation of the party will admit of it, he or she may present it to the meeting in person, and stay till it is read; when, after time given for a solid pause, they should withdraw before that or any other business is proceeded upon. The meeting is then to consider the case, and appoint two or more Friends to inform the party of the result.

Acknowledgments to be made in writing.

When a disowned person removes out of the verge of the meeting which disowned him or her, and applies thereto for reinstatement, acknowledging their error, and if by reason of the distance the applicant cannot be conveniently treated with in person, the said meeting may correspond with the monthly meeting within the compass of which he or she resides, and inquire into their fitness for membership; and if satisfac-

Direction respecting a disowned member living at a distance.

tion on that head is received, a certificate for such person, directed to the said monthly meeting, may be forthwith sent, acknowledging him or her as a member of our society.

Discretionary authority vested in monthly meetings.

As it may not always be necessary that papers of acknowledgment should contain a recital of the occasion of disownment as specified in the testimonies of denial, it is agreed that monthly meetings be left to their discretion in this respect; and that neither testimonies of denial nor acknowledgments be read at the close of our public meetings for worship. In all cases

Members under dealing to have notice previous to the issuing of a testimony,

where a meeting apprehends itself under a necessity to disown a member, let such member, if the occasion and his or her situation will admit of it, be previously informed thereof: And

And when issued, to be informed of the right of appeal.

when the judgment of the meeting is issued, let a copy thereof be delivered to the party testified against, with notification of his or her right of appeal.

TRADE.

IT being evident that where the manifestations and restraints of the Spirit of truth are duly prized and regarded, it leads out of a bondage to the spirit of this world, and preserves the minds of its followers from many fettering and disqualifying entanglements; and contrarywise, that an inordinate love and pursuit of worldly riches, often betrays those who are captivated by them, into many difficulties and dangers, to the great obstruction of the work of truth in the heart: we affectionately desire that the counsel and gracious promise of our blessed Redeemer to his followers, may be borne in remembrance by us, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Truth is safe in its guidance.

Inordinate pursuit of riches involves in difficulty.

This meeting being earnestly concerned that the service of our religious society may not be obstructed, or its reputation dishonoured, by any imprudence of its members in their worldly engagements, recommends to all, that they be careful not to venture upon such business as they do not well understand; nor to launch out

Engagements to be within our means and strictly fulfilled.

in trade beyond their abilities, and at the risk of others; especially on the credit which may be derived from a profession of the truth; but that they bound their engagements by their means; and when they enter into contracts, or give their words, that they endeavour on all occasions strictly to fulfil them.

Hazardous enterprizes to be avoided, and a moderate way of living kept to.

We particularly exhort that none engage in such concerns as depend on the often deceptive probabilities of hazardous enterprizes; but rather content themselves with such a plain and moderate way of living as is consistent with the self-denying principle we make profession of; whereby many disappointments and grievous perplexities may be avoided, and that tranquillity of mind obtained which is inseparable from the right enjoyment even of temporal things. And it is advised that, where any among us err, or are in danger of erring in these respects, they be faithfully and timely admonished.

State of our affairs to be accurately kept.

It is recommended that Friends frequently inspect the state of their affairs, and keep their accounts so clear and accurate, that they may, at any time, easily know whether they live within the bounds of their circumstances, or not; and, in case of death, that these may not be perplexing to survivors. And whenever any find that they have no more property left than is sufficient to discharge their just debts, it is advised, that they immediately consult with some

judicious Friends, and, without loss of time, make their circumstances known to their creditors, carefully avoiding the payment of one in preference to another, that so none may be injured, nor any reproach be incurred by mismanagement.

If a failure is apprehended, creditors are to be consulted.

And where overseers, or other concerned Friends, have reason to fear that any person or family, by living above their means, or from a want of punctuality in fulfilling their contracts, or any other cause, are declining in their circumstances, and likely to fail, it is recommended that such be seasonably treated with, and (if it appear requisite) advised to call their creditors together without delay. And if, notwithstanding this advice, such persons still persist and run into embarrassment, to the loss of others and to their own disreputation, the preparative or monthly meeting to which they belong, ought to be timely informed thereof, and proceed to deal with them acccording to our rules ; when, if this labour also prove ineffectual, a testimony of denial may be issued against them.

Overseers to be vigilant and seasonable in their advice and treatment.

Further embarrassment.

Preparative and monthly meetings to take up the case.

It is advised that where such failures occur, and the cases are under the care of monthly meetings, that the Friends appointed to visit the parties, inquire of their assignees or trustees, how their deficiencies have happened, and report accordingly. And it is the judgment of this meeting that neither monthly nor other meet-

Assignees or trustees to be inquired of.

ings should receive subscriptions, donations or bequests from persons so circumstanced until they have paid off their deficiencies, or are voluntarily acquitted thereof by their creditors: for it should be remembered that though, in such cases, the defaulter may have been legally discharged, the property he may afterwards acquire is not properly his own, till he has fairly paid off his former debts, to the satisfaction of the creditors. Wherefore we further advise that, if any such person or persons, on being suitably reminded of their duty in this respect, shall refuse to comply therewith, inquiry be made into the reason, and if it be not such as shall satisfy the monthly meetings of which they are members, and, they cannot be prevailed with, the said meetings, after a proper time of labour and forbearance, may issue a testimony of denial against them.

Persons retrieving their losses to pay their just debts,

Or be disowned.

Advised that when Friends accept the office of trustee or assignee, they be active in collecting the effects of the estate, and punctual and speedy in making distribution.

Advised that Friends every where carefully avoid being any way concerned in defrauding the government of its duties; that so our ancient testimony in this respect may be inviolably maintained.

Defrauding of the government cautioned against.

We warn our members against a pernicious practice amongst the trading part of the community, which has often issued in the ruin of those concerned therein, viz. That of raising and circulating a kind of paper credit, with indorsements, to give it an appearance of value, without an intrinsic reality; a practice which, as it appears to be inconsistent with the truth we profess, we declare our disapprobation of, and entreat every member of our society to avoid and discourage.

Mere paper credit, inconsistent with truth.

We also caution all in membership with us to avoid entering into joint securities with others, under the specious plea of rendering acts of kindness; many, by so doing, having been suddenly ruined, and their innocent wives and children reduced to deplorable circumstances. "Be not thou, said the wise man, one of them that strike hands; or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?"

Joint securities cautioned against.

We affectionately desire that Friends may wait for divine counsel in all their engagements, and not suffer their minds to be huried away by an inordinate desire of worldly riches; remembering the observation of the apostle in his day, and so often sorrowfully verified in ours, that "They who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare;" and, erring from the faith, "pierce themselves

Divine counsel disregarded sorrow and trouble are the consequence.

through with many sorrows." Even when riches to any extraordinary degree have been amassed by the successful industry of parents, how often have they proved like wings to their children, carrying them beyond the limitations of truth, into liberties repugnant to our religious testimonies, and sometimes into enterprizes, which have terminated in irreparable damage to their temporal affairs, if not an entire forgetfulness of the great work of the soul's salvation.

WAR.

FRIENDS are exhorted faithfully to adhere to our ancient testimony against wars, and fightings, and in no way to unite with any in warlike measures, either offensive or defensive, that by the inoffensiveness of our conduct we may convincingly demonstrate ourselves to be real subjects of the Messiah's peaceful reign, and be instrumental in the promotion thereof, towards its desired completion; when, according to ancient prophecy, "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and its inhabitants shall learn war no more."

Exhortation to a faithful maintenance of our testimony, that we may be instrumental in the promotion of Messiah's peaceful reign.

When goods have been distrained from any Friends on account of their refusal to pay fines for non-performance of military services, and the officers, after deducting the fines and costs, propose to return the remainder, it is the sense of this meeting, that Friends should maintain their testimony by suffering, rather than accept such overplus, unless the same or a part of it is returned without a change of the species.

Overplus of distraints not to be accepted unless in the same goods.

It is declared to be the sense of this meeting, that furnishing waggons, or other means for

Furnishing waggons a military service,

conveying of military stores, is a military service, and that the care of elders, overseers, and faithful Friends, should be extended, in true love and Christian tenderness, to such as deviate herein, in order to convince them of their error.

Tax for drums, &c. contrary to our testimony.

It is the sense of this meeting, that a tax, levied for the purchasing of drums, colours, or for other warlike uses, cannot be paid consistently with our Christian testimony.

Viewing military operations or encouraging the unstable spirit of party advised against.

This meeting fervently recommends to the deep attention of all our members that they be religiously guarded against approving or showing the least connivance at war, either by attending at or viewing of military operations, or in any wise encouraging the unstable deceitful spirit of party, by joining with political devices or associations, however speciously disguised under the ensnaring subtleties commonly attendant thereon; but that they sincerely labour to experience a settlement on the alone sure foundation of pure unchangeable truth; whereby, through the prevalence of unfeigned Christian love and good will to men, we may convincingly demonstrate that the kingdom we seek is not of this world. A kingdom and government whose subjects are free indeed! redeemed from those captivating lusts from whence come wars and fightings.

A living concern for the advancement of our testimony to the peaceable kingdom of Christ,

continuing to spread in many minds, a fervent desire hath prevailed among us, that the members of our religious society would carefully avoid engaging in any trade or business promotive of war, sharing or partaking of the spoils of war by purchasing or selling prize goods, importing or shipping goods in armed vessels, paying taxes for the express purpose of war, grinding of grain, feeding of cattle, or selling their property for the use of the army: that through a close attention to the monitions of divine grace, and guarding against the suppression of it either in themselves or others, they may be preserved in a conduct consistent with our holy profession, from wounding the minds or increasing the sufferings of each other; not at all doubting, that he to whom appertains the kingdom and the power; who is wonderful in working, will continue to carry on and perfect his blessed cause of peace in the earth. A solid attention to this concern is recommended to quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings, and to our brethren in general, it being the judgment of this meeting, that if any of our members do either openly or by connivance pay any fine, penalty or tax in lieu of personal service for carrying on war, or allow their children, apprentices or servants to act therein, or are concerned in arming or equipping vessels with guns, or deal in public certificates issued as a compensation for expenses accrued or services performed in war, that they be tenderly dealt with, and if

Business connected with war to be avoided.

Payment of fines or taxes in lieu of personal service, arming vessels or trading in certificates issued for the purpose of war, cause of dealing and if unsuccessful, disownment.

they cannot be brought to an acknowledgment of their error, monthly meetings are at liberty to testify against them.

Military tax or fine not to be paid however applied.

It is the sense and judgment of this meeting that it is inconsistent with our religious testimony and principle for any Friend to pay a fine or tax, levied on them on account of their refusal to serve in the militia, although such fine or imposition may be applied towards defraying the expenses of civil government; and where deviations in this respect occur, tender dealing and advice should be extended to the party in order to their convincement and restoration; and if this proves ineffectual, monthly meetings should proceed to testify against them.

WILLS.

KNOWING how quickly many are removed by death, it is weightily recommended, that care be taken by each monthly meeting, that Friends who have estates to dispose of, be advised to make their wills in time of health, and strength of judgment, and therein to direct their substance as in justice and wisdom may be to their satisfaction and peace; laying aside all resentment, though occasion may have been given, lest it should go with them to the grave; remembering we all stand in need of mercy and forgiveness. Making such wills in due time can shorten no one's days, but the omission, or delay thereof to a time of sickness, when the mind should not be diverted from a solemn consideration of the approaching awful period of life, has often proved very injurious to many, and been the occasion of creating animosities in families, which the seasonable performance of this necessary duty might have effectually prevented.

Wills to be made in time of health.

Resentment to be extinguished.

Friends are earnestly recommended to employ persons skilful in the law, and of good re-

Wills to be drawn by persons qualified therefor.

pute, to make their wills, as great inconvenience and loss, and sometimes the ruin of families have happened through the unskilfulness of some who have taken upon them to write wills, being unqualified to act in a matter of such importance. And all Friends who may become executors or administrators are advised to make a full, clear and perfect inventory of the estate and effects of the deceased, early after the interment, as many difficulties and disputes have arisen, and sometimes injustice been done for want of it, or by deferring it too long.

WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

FORASMUCH as our women's meetings for discipline were set up and established in divine wisdom, and by long experience have been found of advantage, not only to the society in general, but to the youth of their own sex, in particular; it is earnestly desired, they may be encouraged to come up to the help of their brethren in that part of the discipline of the church properly claiming their attention and care. On considering the nature and extent whereof, it is apprehended a benefit might accrue, by explicitly setting forth their distinct allotment and separate services in their monthly and quarterly meetings, and also in their yearly meeting.

Established in divine wisdom.

Their services as follow.

Women's monthly meetings; are, *First.* To inspect and relieve the wants of the poor of their own sex; and where their own funds are insufficient, they are to apply to the men's meeting for their aid, and for their concurrence, as cases shall require.

Care of the poor.

Second. To take cognizance of proposals of marriage, and appoint two of their members

Proposals of marriage.

to inquire into the conversation and clearness of the woman; also two to the oversight of the marriage.

Mode of treating offenders.

Third. They are to appoint a suitable number of overseers, who are to treat with offenders of their own sex; that their cases be laid before the women's preparative, and if needful their monthly meeting, which should proceed to deal further with such delinquents and report the result of their labours to the men's meeting; and if further dealing is expedient, the men should appoint a committee to unite with the women therein; the report of which joint committee is to be made to each meeting, and the women having considered the same, are to inform the men's meeting of their sense thereon, and the subject to be finally resulted by the men: but when a case is brought by the women into the men's meeting, if on solid consideration further dealing does not appear to be needful, and the men are most easy to issue it, a committee should be appointed to prepare a testimony of disownment, which, when approved, is to be sent to the women's meeting for their concurrence, and care in delivering it to the party.

Admission or reinstatement into membership.

Fourth. On application of a woman for admission or reinstatement into membership; after a religious care therein hath been exercised by women overseers, and in the preparative meeting as the case may require, the women's

monthly meeting is to make an appointment to join the men, the report of which united committee is to be made to each meeting, and the women's meeting having considered the same, are to convey their sense thereon to the men's meeting, where the subject shall be considered and finally resulted.

Fifth. They are to join in certificates of removal for women Friends; in order whereto, the women's monthly meeting is to appoint two or more of their members to make the necessary inquiry, that the same may be prepared; and, after being considered in the women's, is to be laid before the men's meeting; and when there approved and signed, returned to the women's meeting for their signature; but if the certificate is intended to include one or more males, then they are to report the result of their inquiry to the Friends named on the like inquiry by the men's meeting; in which the certificate being approved and signed, is to be sent to the women's meeting for their concurrence and signing. And all certificates received for women Friends, are to be laid before the men's meeting, before they can be fully accepted by the women's meeting. Certificates.

Sixth. When a woman minister apprehends herself under a religious engagement to travel in truth's service, she is first to spread her concern before the women's meeting, and if Concerns of ministers.

united with, the same is to be laid before the men's meeting, whose result is to be communicated to the women's meeting; to which, when a certificate for that purpose is prepared and signed by the men's meeting, it is to be sent for their concurrence and signing.

Appointment of elders.

Seventh. When the nomination of a woman elder is judged expedient, the women's meeting should appoint a judicious committee, to join a like committee of the men's meeting in the consideration thereof; whose united report is to be communicated to each meeting; and the women's meeting, after due deliberation and previous to their making any conclusive minute thereon, are to impart their sense to the men's meeting for their judgment and determination.

Services of preparative meetings.

Eighth. The women's preparative meetings where more than one constitute a monthly meeting, are to consider and answer the queries: which is likewise to be done in their monthly meetings; from which they are to report the state of each monthly meeting to their respective quarterly meeting; to attend which as their representatives, they should nominate two or more of their members.

WOMEN'S QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

First. When a woman minister under a religious concern to travel in truth's service,

produces to the quarterly meeting a certificate of the approbation of the monthly meeting of which she is a member, if the concern is concurred with in the women's meeting, it should be submitted to the men's meeting, and when approved, an endorsement to that effect should be made on the certificate, signed by the clerk, and returned to the women's meeting for signing by their clerk.

Certificates for ministers and consideration of their concerns to travel in truth's service.

Second. They are to receive the written accounts sent from the respective women's monthly meetings, and transmit the collected answers to the queries, with such other matters as appear needful, to the women's yearly meeting; to attend the service whereof, each quarterly meeting is to appoint a suitable number of representatives.

Reports conveyed to the yearly meeting.

Representatives.

Third. They are to communicate to their respective monthly meetings, such advices as they apprehend necessary, with any epistles or writings issued for that purpose by their yearly meeting; nominate committees at the request of the men's meeting to visit their monthly meetings, or for any other service which the men's meeting shall judge expedient; and in all respects, they are to attend to those matters which may properly come under the notice and care of women's quarterly meetings.

General services.

THE YEARLY MEETING OF WOMEN FRIENDS,

Correspondence with other yearly meetings.

Held annually in Philadelphia, at the time of holding this meeting, is at liberty to correspond with any other yearly meetings of their own sex, either in America or elsewhere, and to issue such counsel and admonition to their own quarterly and monthly meetings, as in the wisdom of truth shall appear conducive to real benefit and mutual edification; but the said yearly meeting is not to hear or determine on any appeal, nor at liberty to make or alter any rules of discipline or queries.

No interference with appeals or making discipline.

Stock.

They are to have a stock of their own, for such services as may fall more properly under their notice.

Fair records to be preserved.

And finally it is desired that a fair record be kept of the minutes and proceedings of the yearly, quarterly and monthly meetings of women Friends; and that annually their representatives to the yearly meeting exercise a proper religious care in the choice of a clerk.

YEARLY MEETING.

IT appears by the records, that our first yearly meeting was held at Burlington in New Jersey the thirty-first day of the Sixth Month, 1681, O. S. for the provinces of Pennsylvania, and New Jersey; that in 1685, it was agreed to be held alternately at Burlington and Philadelphia; that in 1755 the time of holding it was changed to the Ninth Month; that in 1760 it was concluded to be held at the same time at Philadelphia only; and that in 1798, the time of holding it was altered to the third Second-day in the Fourth Month, as it now is; the yearly meeting of ministers and elders to be on the seventh day of the week preceding; and both to begin at the tenth hour.

Account of its first establishment and the times of holding it to the present year, 1806.

It is agreed that such Friends as may be appointed to prepare epistles shall meet together before they proceed on the service, and also examine the several essays previous to their being laid before this meeting.

Committee on epistles.

Agreed that all letters or papers directed to the yearly meeting, except from such meetings

Letters or papers to be examined.

as regularly correspond therewith, be first perused by a few Friends to be appointed, who are to consider and report whether the same be proper to be read in this meeting or not.

Extracts from the minutes to go to all the meetings for discipline.

Agreed, that when extracts from the minutes of this meeting are ordered to be sent to the quarterly meetings, a full copy shall be sent by each of those meetings to their respective monthly meetings, and by the monthly to each of their preparative meetings, in order that each meeting may have a copy thereof, to have recourse to as occasions may require.

Certificates to be read in the meeting.

The certificates of such Friends, members of other yearly meetings, who from a religious concern are drawn to attend this, are to be read herein.

END.

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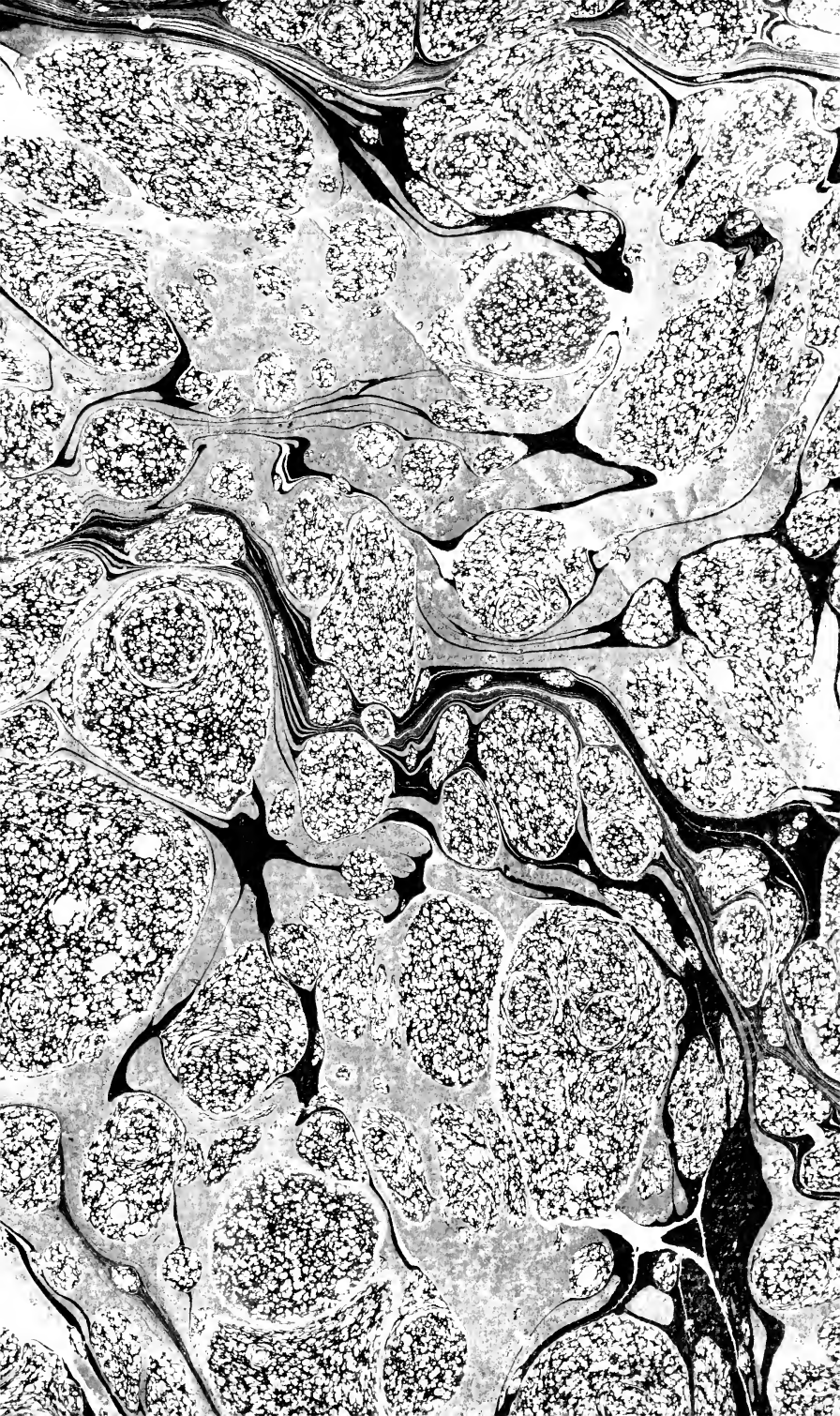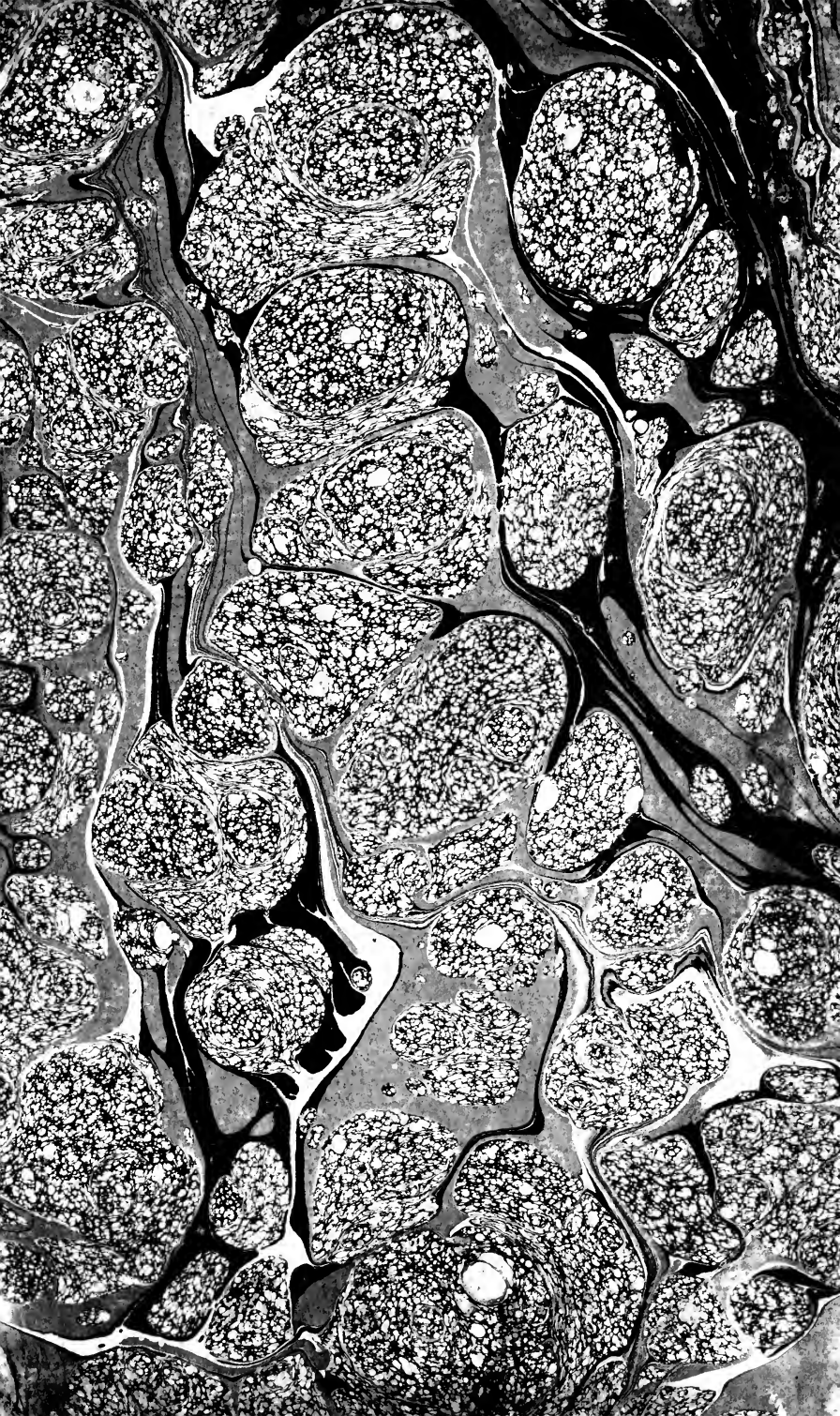
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